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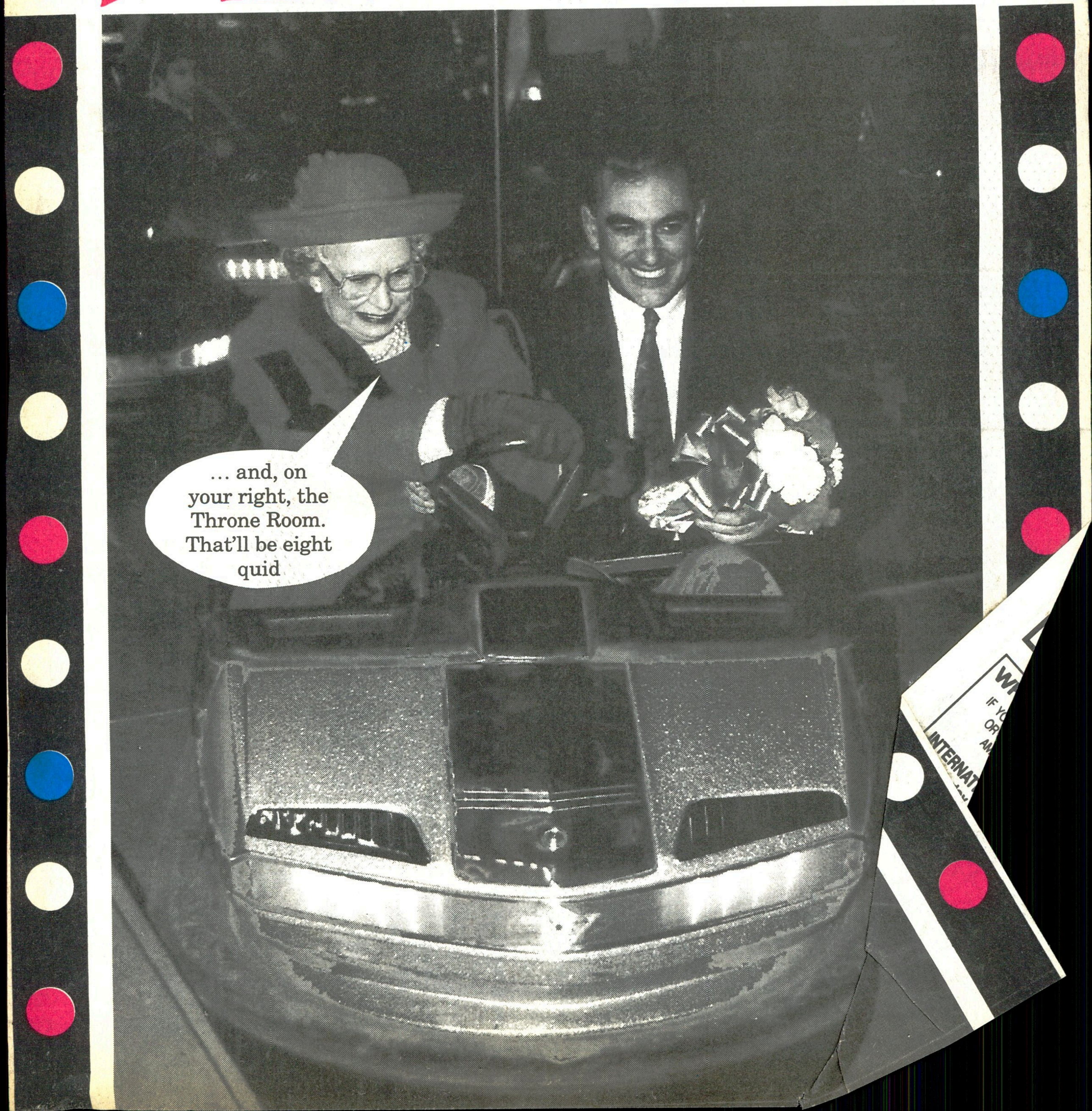

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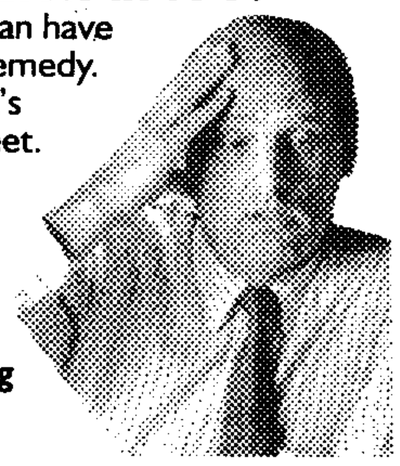

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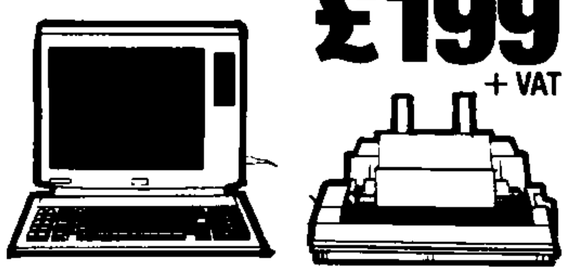

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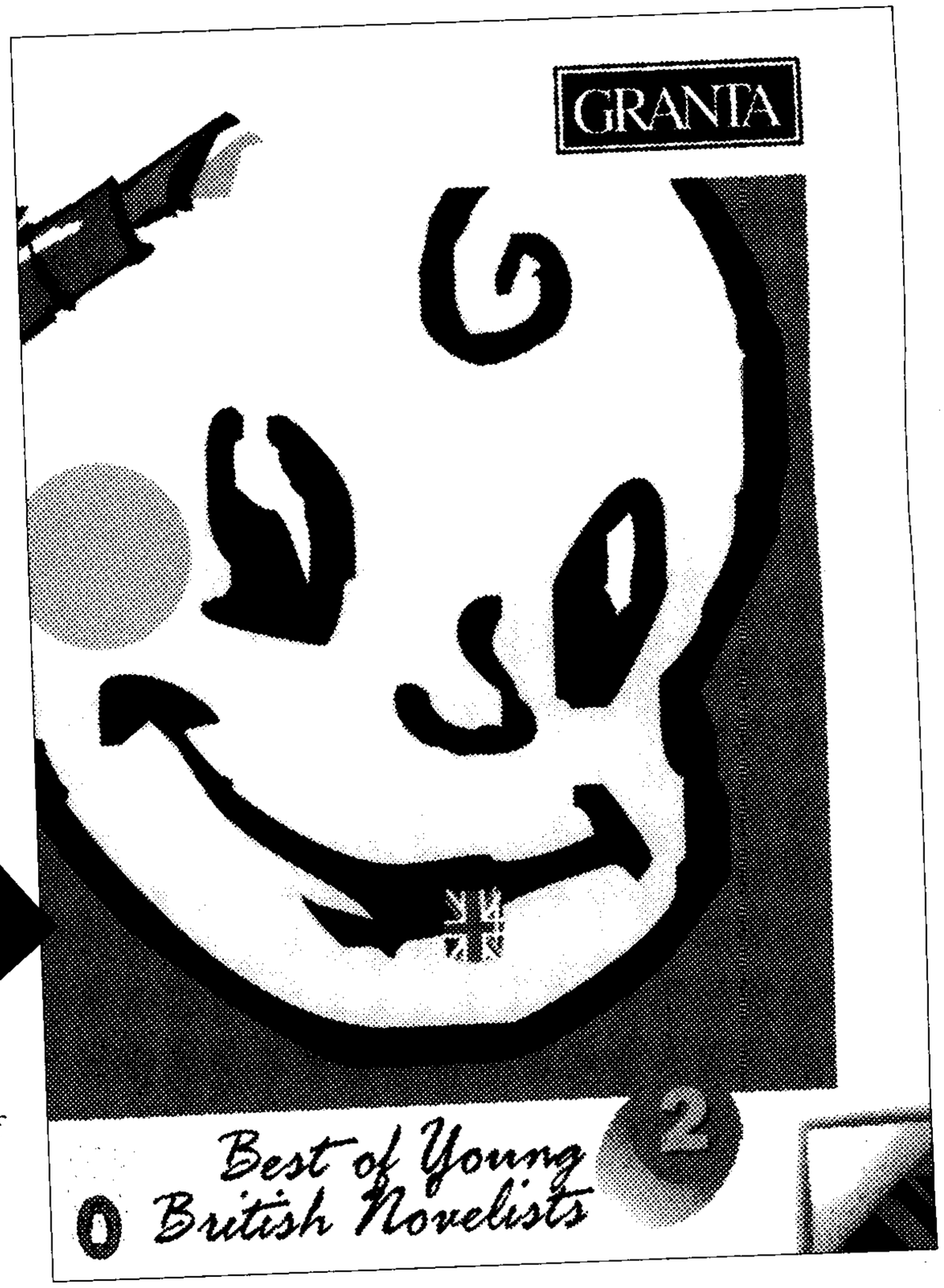

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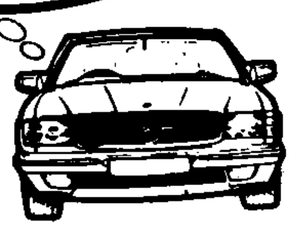

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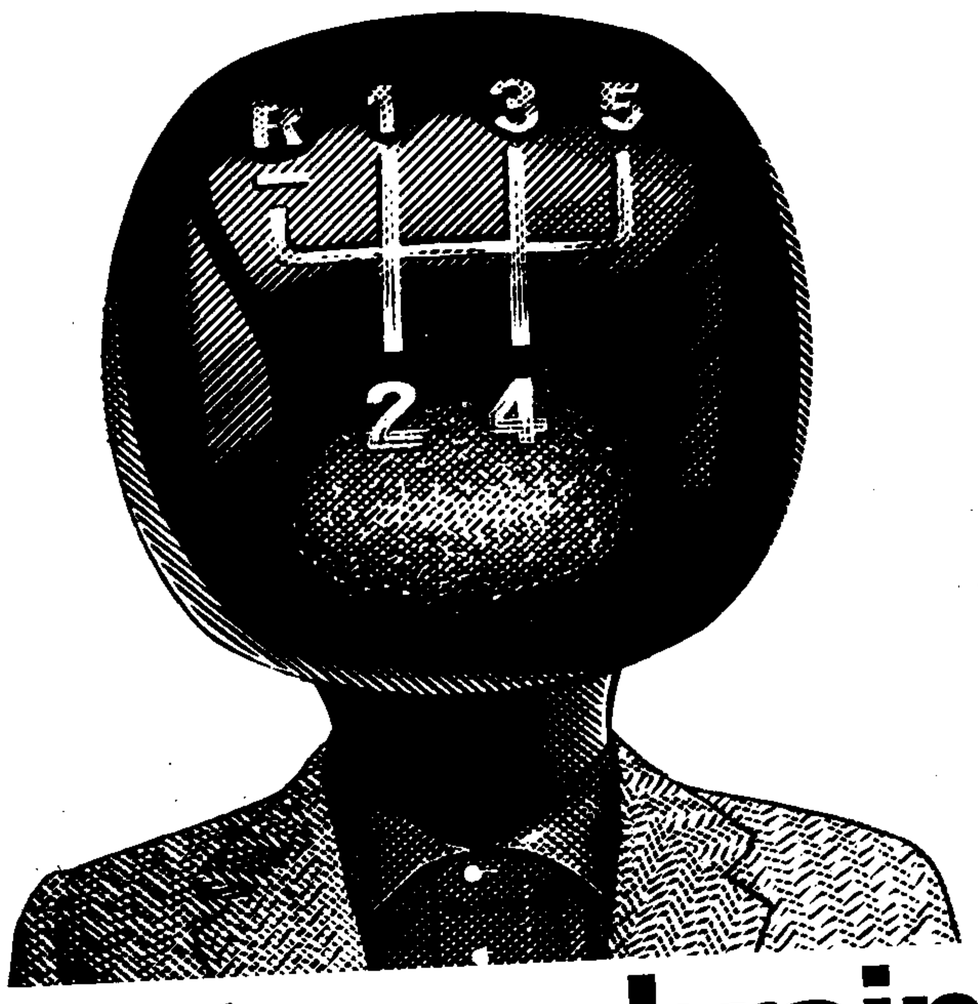

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Gnome

I HAVE DECIDED to follow the advice of Mr Martyn Lewis. This column will, therefore, be entirely devoted to good news.

I, for one, will not be guilty of thinking pessimistic thoughts or of harbouring negative feelings when the world is such an obviously cheerful place.

Let me just take one story at random which proves that not every news item in the press is cause for depression.

This very week a senior figure in the brewing industry retired from his job. This senior figure, let us call him Lord G, was the chairman of a firm that for ease of reference we shall call G—ness. Lord G, after long and exemplary service, left G—ness and had to forfeit his salary of £777,000 per annum.

This has all the makings of a tragic tale. But there was a silver lining in the cloud and a happy ending to the story.

Lord G, despite losing the salary, managed to secure himself a pension of £500,000 a year for the rest of his life! For doing nothing!

Isn't that heartwarming? It is surely just the sort of thing that the BBC News should put at the top of its Nine O'Clock Bulletin in order to cheer the country up.

And what could be more positive as a role model for the young than the sight of an elderly businessman retiring to spend more time with his money.

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COLOUR SECTION

NO ONE was happier about his brief to try to rescue the government at Newbury than the president of the board of trade, Michael Heseltine.

He took to the task with his customary flair — and the joy of a man who knows that heads he wins ("Tory Party saved from ruin by blond bomber") and tails he wins ("Major crashes to disaster at Newbury").

Ever since he flounced out of Mrs Thatcher's government in 1986, Hezza has been plotting his route to Number Ten. He thought he had achieved his goal when he knocked Thatch out in 1990, and despite his iron self-discipline has never forgiven Major for pipping him at the post. More and more loudly, his supporters say that Major's is a wimps' government, paralysed by loyalty to the Thatcherites.

Major cannot move against the Thatcherite rebels, says Hezza, because he owes them for their votes in the 1990 leadership contest. So every time Major appears to be taking a firm line, he suddenly disintegrates into compromise and fudge. Urged on by his doughty and officeless lieutenant Emma Nicholson, Hezza is waiting for the time he can demand a government which knows where it is going and is openly and positively European. After the pits fiasco in October, the Heselteenies kept quiet. But now they state that the crisis itself shows that Hezza was right after all — and didn't he do well to come out of it in such triumph?

CEDRIC BROWN, chief executive of British Gas, has given his official forecast — and it is not good — of the future price of gas.

In a speech to the Institute of Energy he said: "Our central view is that, after a period of stability, prices will need to begin to rise gradually to reflect the increased costs of production from more expensive UK continental shelf fields (ie the North Sea) or imports. Prices could be some 15 percent higher in real terms [that is on top of inflation] by around the year 2000."

As he adds that there is a wide range of uncertainty in any such forecast, the increase could be even larger — and it probably will be.

This was not, of course, the impression given by British Gas's evidence to the select committee on trade and industry, or to Offer, the office of electricity regulation, when the gasmen were trying to help the government shut down their great rival, the coal industry. Then they insisted that our reserves of gas would last for 21 years even if gas were used to make electricity, and if that were true then the cost of imports before the year 2000 would not even arise. British Gas also said that gas would produce power at 2.3 to 2.7p a unit compared with 3.6 to 4.2p for coal.

This line was swallowed by Professor Stephen Littlechild, the director of Offer, who issued a report at the height of the coal crisis supporting Michael Heseltine by saying that gas was a better buy. A lot of people are going to have to eat their words, not least British Gas, which is preparing for the day when it has to go to its regulator and explain that the price to customers must rise, despite all the happy forecasts made when the situation required its experts to talk sweet.

12.05 A Bigger Europe For The Smaller Business
12.30 Closedown

Time Out

THE government's obsession with privatising security is not shared by one of its most ardent admirers and financial backers, Prince Khalid Abdullah of Saudi Arabia.

In the mid-80s, the prince decided to expand his already huge horse-racing interests into good old British breeding. He bought Cayton Park stud in Berkshire, had it completely and expensively revamped and called it Juddmonte Farm.

Naturally this valuable property and its bloodstock needed protection, so the prince and his agents hired those highly respected security guards, Group 4. Enthusiasm for the company dimmed a little when a barn was set on fire, ostensibly to relieve the boredom of one of the security guards.

Then another guard called in a manager late at night with a story that he had been set upon by an intruder and beaten over the head. The guard was taken to hospital where nurses reported that he had suffered no injuries at all, and that his story was almost certainly a hoax. Nor were Saudi managers impressed when they heard that another guard had been suddenly transferred to a Maidenhead dealer where cars were damaged in what appeared to be another dramatised intrusion.

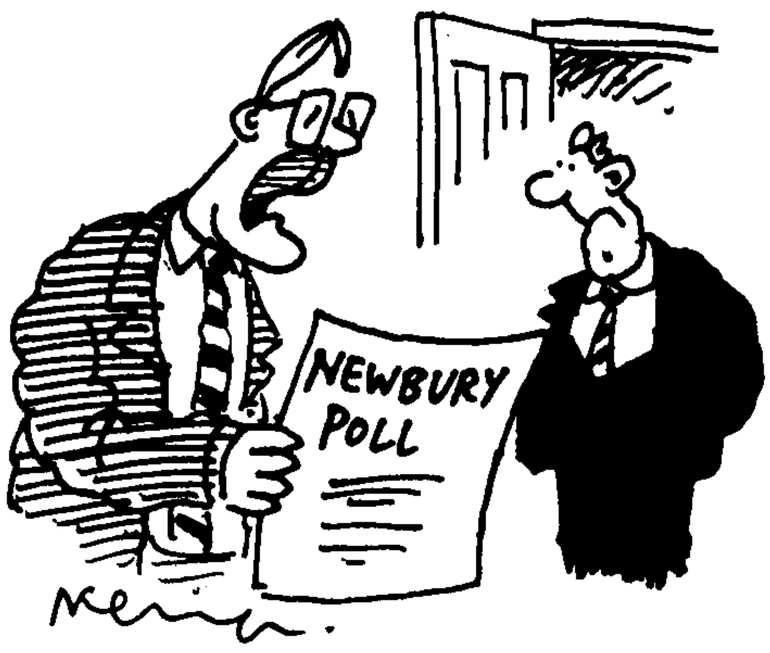
The outcome was that Prince Kahlid and his retinue did exactly the opposite to what the government prison service is currently doing. He decided to take all his security "in house" and employ his security guards directly.

WHEN the world tour of Boutros Boutros-Ghali, United Nations secretary-general, reached Europe, the Serbs were busy defying UN resolutions in Bosnia and Boo Boo's UN troops were busy picking up the human remains.

Unfortunately Boo-Boo himself was too busy to visit his troops or indeed to make an appearance anywhere in the Balkans. The reason? He found he had pressing business in Vatican City and San Marino.

Admittedly the Pope did give $300,000 to help relief work in Bosnia; but few in the UN can work out how the UN's relationship with San Marino could be more important than the tribal war in the former Yugoslavia.

Mind you, perhaps the region was better off without Boo Boo after all. Someone who can land in Sarajevo as he did last time and tell the citizens to stop complaining because he can think of 10 places worse off is hardly what the Bosnians need at this particular moment.



"Disappointing, yet insignificant — but enough of me"

STREET of SHAME

WHILE Andreas Whittam Strobes contemplates the wreckage of his ambitions to own the *Observer*, he has a new problem looming — the imminent publication of *Paper Dreams*, a history of the *Indescribablyboring* by one of his co-founders, Stephen Glover, who paints a deeply unflattering picture of Whittam Strobes's business methods.

One revelation in the book which has aroused particular interest among eagle-eyed hacks at the *Indie* concerns the way in which Strobes persuaded *La Repubblica* and *El Pais* to invest £20 million in his paper in 1990.

The newspaper was losing money by the bucketful and urgently needed new capital. Strobes and his chief accountant, Graham Luff, drew up a three-year plan of financial projections. According to Glover, one version of the plan, which was shown only to the *Indie*'s executive directors, "was printed on white paper contained in a red plastic file. The 'southern Europeans' had a similar file, though their paper was green".

Note that Glover says "similar" rather than "the same". What can this mean? One possible explanation is that certain financial information was not in the plan shown to the southern Europeans, but this clearly cannot be the case. No, there must be some other reason for issuing two versions of the figures. Perhaps Messrs Strobes and Luff — or indeed Glover — would care to enlighten us.

OH DEAR. Two weeks after a major thrash to launch the new exciting *Sunset Times Magazine*, editor Brillo has announced 12 new exciting... er... redundancies.

The staff laid off are particularly irritated at the thought of the grand celeb-filled launch party where Brillo kept boasting of the magazine that he would "throw money at it". Throwing people out of work is not quite the same thing, they feel.

THE *UK Press Gazette* devoted many column inches to its annual regional press awards, in particular to the *Manchester Evening News*, which won the newspaper and daily newspaper of the year awards.

In a fulsome tribute, the *UKPG*'s correspondent in the north-west, George Dearsley, announced hysterically that it was "boom time for Manchester"; that the city had proved it can match the best in the world and that the *Evening News* had "shown its quality too." Despite the recession, *Evening News* profits were up and the paper's readership was getting younger.

Much of the rest of the article praised little-known *MEN* editor Mike Unger, who saved the paper by, among other things, such revolutionary tactics as going tabloid and dropping a 35-part series on *Coronation Street* half-way through. What Dearsley failed to say was that a large part of his monthly wages comes courtesy of the, er, *Manchester Evening News*, to which he contributes exciting features on wacky young people, showbizz diary pieces and a derivative Saturday Q&A column à la *Grauniad* and the rest.

IN THE continuing absence of Rupert Murdoch, a female heavy-goods driver from Oswaldtwistle, Lancashire, was the star performer last week at the industrial tribunal investigating the sacking of 400 TNT lorry drivers who broke the Wapping picket lines.

Her determination to fight her case alone, after fear of bankruptcy had forced her male colleagues to throw in the towel, won her a £6,000 out-of-court settlement.

Six days into the hearing, which was planned to last six weeks, the drivers' solicitor passed them a warning from the tribunal chairman, Peter Russell, that if they lost their case they would probably have to pay costs "in the region of £50,000" to TNT Express (UK). The 35 drivers, who could not possibly meet such a bill, promptly decided to withdraw.

They returned the next day to see Cheryl Cooper, a veteran of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne night run, announce that she would press on alone, forcing the hearing to continue. "Our solicitor warned us that we would be pursued ruthlessly for the money if the chairman ordered costs against us," she said. "I was warned that I would never get credit from a bank or a loan for a house. I am not going to be threatened in that way and I intend fighting on." Lawyers for TNT, which is partly owned by the Dirty Digger, hastily made a series of offers to Cooper, which culminated in the £6,000 she accepted.

One of her male colleagues, Tony Holmes of Southport, then decided to rejoin the fight. When Holmes turned up at the tribunal the following morning, the chairman announced that ordering the drivers to pay TNT's costs had not, after all, been in his mind. Consternation from the drivers at the back of the room prompted Holmes to tell the chairman that, freed from the threat of bankruptcy, many drivers wished to come back into the case.

This one may run and run. After the second week of hearings, no driver has yet been allowed to give evidence to the tribunal. When they do, they will no doubt have some interesting testimony about their experiences in the employ of Rupert Murdoch, whose "pressure" on TNT was given as the reason for their dismissal.

TWO WEEKS ago the *Sunday Times* carried a big report on the Newbury by-election — which had very little to say about the merits of any of the various candidates.

Instead it chose to focus on the Tory MP Gerry Malone, who had been sent to Newbury as a "minder" for the Conservative candidate. No superlatives were spared in the *Sunset Times*'s hymn of praise to Malone, described as "a minder of the highest quality", a "rising star in the Tory firmament" and "the master of the humorous one-liner".

Gerry Malone is indeed a man of many talents. For example, he is the best friend of Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill, editor of the *Sunset Times*, whom he has known since they were at Glasgow university together. When he was out of Parliament, between 1987 and 1992, Neill came to his rescue by appointing him Scottish editor and "editorial consultant" at the *Sunset Times*, in spite of Malone's conspicuous lack of previous journalistic experience. The two men are also business partners: in 1991 Malone and Neill jointly bought the marketing wing of the Country Gentlemen's Association.

Strangely, none of these facts was mentioned in the *ST*'s shameless puff for the "rising star".

PAUL "Loonybins" Johnson filled a whole page of the *Spectator* two weeks ago with an ecstatic account of the first night of Tom Stoppard's new play, *Arcadia*.

Johnson is not, however, an entirely disinterested critic. He and Stoppard have been close friends ever since they were neighbours in the Buckinghamshire village of Iver during the 1970s; indeed one of Stoppard's plays, *Night and Day*, is dedicated to Johnson. Strangely, Loonybins forgot to mention this association in the course of his rave review.

OBSERVER

TINY ROWLAND may be selling the *Observer*, but he is certainly not abandoning his habit of manipulating the media.

As he nervously awaits publication of Tom Bower's unauthorised biography later this month, along with a BBC docu-mentary written and reported by Bower, I predict that a spate of Lonrho-inspired stories will show the ageing goosestepper in a heroic light.

Already there has been an extraordinary full-page "exclusive" in the London *Evening Standard*. It revealed how Tiny, a former member of the Hitler Youth, if my memory serves me, had "rescued two Mossad agents from a firing squad".

The story, spoon-fed by Lonrho to *Standard* hack Keith Dovkants, concerned two Israeli spies who had been captured in Khartoum and sentenced to death by the Sudanese president, Lt Gen Omar Hassan al-Bashir. They were released after Tiny interceded with the general-issimo, whom he describes as "a friend".

Tiny seems suddenly keen to boast of his involvement in the Sudan. On 10 April the *Observer* carried, along with a 13-page colour supplement on mass starvation in southern Sudan, the revelation that Rowland had been "convening" Sudanese peace talks in the Nigerian city of Abuja. Meanwhile on 24 February listeners to the BBC World Service *Focus on Africa* were astounded to hear Tiny claim that for the past 10 years he has been a member of the rebel Sudanese People's Liberation Front, which is waging a guerrilla war against the government led by his "friend" al-Bashir. He described how he had been "shuttling back and forth" between SPLA leader Colonel John Garang and the government in Khartoum, arranging peace talks.

Rowland, whose huge investments in Sudan have suffered badly from the civil war, has been energetically grooming Garang on the international stage. But his work could come to nothing due to an increasingly successful leadership bid from Riak Machar, who has formed a rival "SPLA United", which includes most of the SPLA's high command. Unsure which SPLA faction he should support, Tiny has, true to form, been backing both, as well as somehow keeping on good terms with the regime in Khartoum. Both factions enjoy Lonrho facilities in Kenya, and rival delegations of SPLA leaders often stay on different floors of Lonrho's Metropole Hotel in London and the Panafrique Hotel in Nairobi.

Meanwhile, Tiny has been putting pressure on others: the Angolan politician Khendrah Barreira, for example. At the end of March she received a 6am phone call from Rowland in Kampala, Uganda, in which he demanded to know why she had been helping Bower with his biography. Barreira was mystified, as she told the former Mr Fuhrop, because she had never even heard of Bower. She was further bewildered when David Kincha, a former deputy chief of the Israeli Mossad who works for Rowland, flew from Stockholm to Luanda to debrief her about her "conspiracy with Bower to destroy Tiny".

Elsewhere on the planet, Rowland's niece, who lives in Hamburg, had agreed to a visit from Bower and said she would let him have a rare 1930s photograph of Tiny in his fetching Hitler Youth uniform. (He looks *super*!) But when Bower arrived in Hamburg for his appointment with her, Rowland's niece refused to see him.

Meanwhile Lord Shawcross has written to BBC chairman Marmaduke Hussey to say that it is outrageous that Bower should be allowed to make a film about Rowland, that it is quite proper for Rowland to refuse to answer Bower's impertinent questions, and that Rowland nevertheless should have the right to see the programme and approve it before transmission. Of course he should.

THE select committee system is in crisis following its cynical manipulation by Michael Heseltine in the coal debacle.

Richard Caborn, chairman of the trade and industry committee, has launched a furious attack on the president of the board of trade, accusing him, and by implication John Major, of undermining the authority of the Commons "by procedural means and political manipulation".

Caborn has appealed for help to the liaison committee, a body unknown to the public but which oversees the select committees. In an unusually revealing account by a senior MP of skulduggery in high places, he has disclosed how Heseltine and Major kept fending off inquiries about the pits closure plan by referring to the work being done by Caborn's all-party select committee; and then how they barred discussion of two amendments to the government's own white paper which proposed no change in the plan. The amendments would have given MPs a chance to vote on the committee's recommendations.

"I believe that in doing this they subverted the authority and the will of the House and undermined the credibility and independence of the select committee system," says Caborn, normally a mild-mannered Tribune MP.

He notes that last October, when the government was in danger over the scheme to sack 30,000 miners and needed to secure a majority in the House "the prime minister, the president of the board of trade and other ministers constantly used the fact of our committee's inquiry to reassure the House, the public and the miners."

But Caborn discloses that, out of the limelight, Heseltine was pursued a very different path. The select committee invited him to return to be questioned in public in the three months between publication of the select committee report in January and the deliberately-delayed publication of the government white paper at the end of March, "but he declined".

Caborn says he made "strenuous efforts" to discover whether the House would be allowed to consider the select committee's recommendations. "For five months I used every available formal and informal means... without success. I raised the issue with the Speaker privately and in the House. I was advised that the Speaker has no authority in these matters and that they are entirely in the hands of the government. The usual channels failed to respond to my requests for clarification."

He concludes: "It cannot be right for the House to allow any government to put a select committee or the House in this position. It is quite wrong for a government to be able to use an independent select committee to diffuse a political crisis and then refuse to allow the House to consider, debate and vote on the committee's conclusions."

The liaison committee consists of the chairmen of all select committees — mostly Tories — and has not yet fixed a date for the meeting at which it will consider Caborn's complaint. Select committees normally meet in public so that voters can find out what is going on. The liaison committee meets in secret so they can't.

A WEEK IS a *very* long time in politics, to judge by recent events in Burton-on-Trent.

On Friday 23 April it was announced that the town's major employer, Pirelli, would be halving its workforce of 1,300 with the transfer of car tyre production to Carlisle. East Staffordshire council, which is Labour-controlled, called on Michael Heseltine, president of the board of trade, to provide money under the assisted area status scheme, as the town's unemployment would be likely to reach 23 per cent with the Pirelli decision.

The knee-jerk reaction of local Tory MP Sir Ivan Lawrence was to tell the press that assisted area status should be abolished so that the regions could "compete on a level playing field".

However, by Monday 26 April, Sir Ivan had changed his tune. "I have always worked to bring industry to Burton," he said. "Now, if there is any availability of government assistance, we should be able to qualify for it."

HOW CAN one explain the tremendous interest shown by Tory MPs in the sexual offences bill, a private member's measure which makes it possible for 14-year-old boys to be prosecuted for rape?

The bill tidies up an anomaly in the law, and absolutely no one is opposed to it. It was proposed by a Tory MP and agreed by the government, Labour, the Liberal-Democrats and all the other parties. Its second reading was passed on the nod, and its committee stage took 20 minutes. Yet when it came back into the chamber for the report stage on Friday 30 April, there was a sudden stampede by Tories to speak on it.

On and on went people like Lady Olga Maitland (Sutton and Cheam) and James Couchman (Gillingham) on the terrible increase in sex crimes committed by the nation's youth... on how no women was safe from rampaging 14-year-olds... how possible it was, these days, for 14-year-olds to penetrate, etc etc. For three long hours the Commons debated this entirely non-controversial measure, which was duly passed into law without a single vote against it.

Could it have been that the interest shown had nothing to do with sexual offences at all, but much more to do with the measure which followed it — the far more controversial medicines information bill? This bill, introduced by Labour's Giles Radice, does nothing more than bring the law on information about drugs into line with that of the United States. It gives the public the right to know basic facts about the testing of drugs, which currently are kept secret. When the committee on the safety of medicines finds a drug unsafe, for instance, under the bill it would be obliged to tell the public why.

This mild measure was immediately patronised by "Wet Willie" Waldegrave, John Major's spokesman on empty gestures — aka the citizens' charters and open government — who strode round the Commons saying it was just the sort of measure the country needed.

A somewhat different view was taken by the drugs companies, who saw the bill as a threat to their already enormous profits. Though they knew something very similar to the bill was bound to emerge sooner or later from Europe, they decided — behind Radice's back — to throw the full force of their considerable propaganda skills against the bill.

This meant marshalling Tory MPs with big drug companies in their constituencies, such as Lady Olga Maitland and Bowen Wells (Hertford and Stortford), and James Couchman, who is a paid adviser to the drug company Pfizer. All the lobbyists' parliamentary tricks of the trade were deployed to prevent the bill (despite Mr Waldegrave's support) from reaching the statute book.

When it came up for report it was mysteriously preceded by the sexual offences bill, about which Lady Olga and Mr Couchman had so much to say. When the bill finally came up for debate, it had no fewer than 114 amendments. Only two of them had been reached before the bill was talked out — to the cheers of Tory MPs who had ensured another triumph of narrow commercial interest over freedom of information. Wet Willie Waldegrave was nowhere to be seen.

THERE is much strife in Finchley Conservative Association, where sitting MP Hartley Booth has pursued a slavishly pro-Maastricht line, while his local agent Michael Love, whom Booth defeated in the selection process for Mrs Thatcher's seat, has been accused of fomenting discord.

Not only has Love, in conjunction with the association chairman, invited arch-Eurosceptic Lord Tebbit to speak at a meeting (without informing Booth), but there has been a whispering campaign in the association to suggest that Booth might find himself the subject of deselection with Love the favourite to replace him.

Indeed, so anxious are Booth's friends and supporters that they have complained about Love's conduct to Conservative central office.

PETER TEMPLE-MORRIS, Arabophile Tory MP for Leominster, has recently emerged as an unofficial spokesman for the Islamic Republic of Iran, in stark contrast to his earlier position following the overthrow of the monarchy there.

Temple-Morris has been secretary of the Anglo-Iranian parliamentary group since 1974 and was supportive of the shah throughout his difficulties. He even played host to the new shah when he visited London in 1982. However, he has since been won over by President Rafsanjani and has begun to speak out in his favour.

Last summer he was the only MP to criticise the British government for expelling two Iranian embassy officials, who were charged with consorting with foreign intelligence organisations and plotting to kill Salman Rushdie. In mid-April he said John Major had been "badly advised in agreeing to see Rushdie".

What Temple-Morris rarely points out is that he has an Iranian wife, Tahere, of some 30 years' standing, whose father, Senator Khozeime Alam, was very close to the Iranian royal family.

He had his wealth and property in Iran confiscated by order of the Islamic regime and is naturally keen to get it back.

IN OUR edition of Friday 9 April, we claimed that Mr Barry Porter, one of the six Conservative MPs on the trade and industry select committee, approved the committee's report on coal and then subsequently changed his opinion.

In fact he abstained at the vote on the report because he believed all along that a large part of the report was unrealistic. We are happy to put the record straight.

'Backbiter'

MPs FOR HIRE

CONTINUING the *Eye*'s snouts-in-the-trough feature about MPs and the companies and organisations that bankroll them, we turn our attention to two especially "liquid" lobbies.

BREWERS AND THE DRINKS LOBBY

James Couchman *Gillingham:* Adviser to The Gin and Vodka Association.

Roger Gale *North Thanet:* Consultant to Scottish and Newcastle Breweries plc.

Graham Riddick *Colne Valley:* Adviser to the Brewers' Society.

David Shaw *Dover:* Director of Hoskins Brewery plc.

Michael Shersby *Uxbridge:* Consultant to Grand Metropolitan plc.

Roger Sims *Chislehurst:* Adviser to The Scotch Whisky Association.

THE OIL LOBBY

Alan Duncan *Rutland and Melton:* Owner of Harcourt Consultants, trading as an oil broker. Also a Consultant on petroleum matters to the Vitol Group of companies.

Gerald Malone *Winchester:* Consultant to Texaco Ltd.

Richard Ottaway *Croydon South:* Director of Coastal States Petroleum (UK) Ltd.

Grovel

WITH THE forthcoming publication of Alan Clark's *Diaries* (1983-1991), we can expect much in the way of vitriol about the former minister's colleagues. But will the final version be bowdlerized?

In contrast to the normal situation, Clark's editor at Weidenfeld & Nicolson, Ion Trewin, has been trying to persuade him to tone *down* some of the passages rather than beef them up, in particular those of a sexually candid nature.

In one passage, for example, Clark says he prefers sexual intercourse with women under 25 years of age because they are "c.-c." In a footnote to the original manuscript, Clark explains what this meant, but Trewin has been urging him to dispense with the footnote. In case Trewin should have prevailed, I can exclusively reveal that "c.-c." means "cunnilingus-compatible" — whatever that means.

I HEAR of a typically louche incident at the Groucho Club involving interior designer Tchaik Chassay, who is one of the club's directors as well as the person responsible for its decor.

Chassay is in the habit of turning up at the Groucho in the company of young females. He will usually ask the receptionist for the keys to the guest bedrooms, asking which rooms are unoccupied and explaining that the young female in tow is a potential business client who would like to see examples of his work.

Recently, Chassay arrived with a young female and at some point disappeared upstairs, even though he had ascertained that all the guest bedrooms were occupied. (For he knew since he had designed the club that the staff bedroom does not have a key.)

When he re-emerged, looking dishevelled and elated, a suspicious manageress went upstairs to explore. Sure enough, she discovered that the staff bedroom had, er... been "used". Furious, she tore the sheets from the bed, then darted downstairs to confront Chassay as he was leaving. She berated him and told him that she would be reporting the matter to the club's managing director Tony Mackintosh.

The following day a sheepish Chassay sent flowers to the receptionist whose bed he had, er... appropriated. He has nonetheless received a formal warning from Mackintosh. Ah, Bohemia!

"I've already paid — I'm a taxpayer"

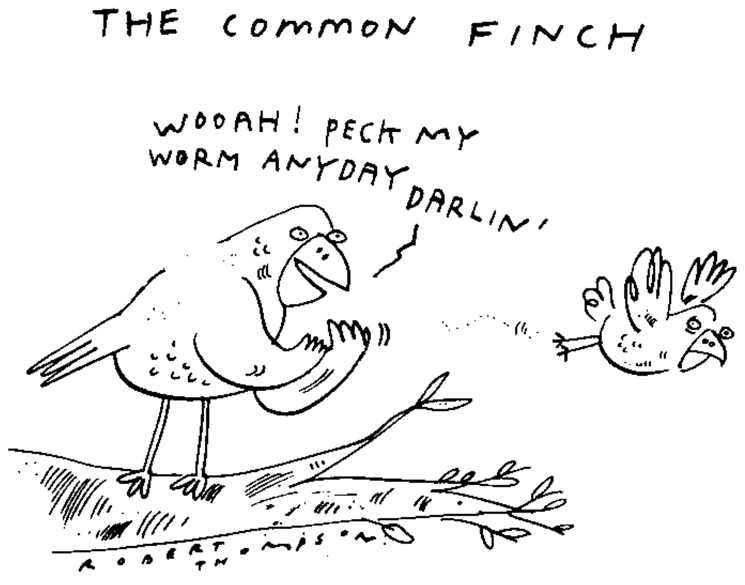
TO ITN's flashy headquarters in Grays Inn Road, where editor-in-chief Stewart Purvis is hosting a reception for fellow alumni of Exeter university who now work in newspapers and television.

The affair is little more than a sordid attempt by the university — already awash with Arab money — to get plugs in the media for its second-rate academics. I am about to leave when a cocky young hack from the *Sun*, Matthew Wright (class of '87), enlivens the dreary proceedings by holding forth on his organ's inalienable right to expose MPs who publicly pronounce upon the sanctity of family values yet privately go "knobbing" anything in a skirt.

A lady sitting directly in front of the brash young man takes loud exception to this and has to be helped from the room. Only later does the hapless Wright learn her identity: none other than special guest Judith Mellor (class of '71), who is evidently still having difficulty coming to terms with the role of the press in exposing her husband David's "knobbing" activities.

● *THAT Bill Clinton should address the Newspaper Association of America in Boston on the very day that his home town of Washington is besieged by militant lesbians and gay persons is not in the least suspicious.*

What is a bit queer is that his name should appear on the association programme in a completely different typeface to the rest of the blurb. Cynics claim this proves the Boston trip (400 miles from Washington) was a last minute excuse — but I need hardly remind them that Clinton has bent over backwards on the issue of gay rights, especially in the military.



I STUMBLE across an amusing advertisement in the classified section of the *Times*, which states that Sir Ralph Halpern — he of Fyffes times-a-night legend — requires a part-time PA.

The advertisement made the following stipulations: "Capable of working on own initiative. Discretion, confidentiality and sense of humour essential." Interestingly, the ad suggests that candidates should send a "recent photograph", and it does not say that Page 3 girls cannot apply.

● *GIVEN the recent kerfuffle at the Observer, I was amazed that Donald "Busy" Trelford, editor of the world's weakest Sunday newspaper, has been able to find time to moonlight. Yet sure enough, there he was last week exploring a new career as a stand-in radio host on Richard Littlejohn's LBC morning show.*

Pixie could be heard interviewing Cynthia Heimel, author of the ahem, seminal work Sex Tips For Girls, who was promoting her latest book, Get Your Tongue Out of My Mouth, I'm Kissing You Goodbye. LBC listeners wishing to escape this vulgarity could switch to BBC Radio 2, where Sunday Times editor Andrew "Brillo Pad" Neill was presenting the Jimmy Young Show in Young's absence. His subject for discussion? Testicular cancer.

Pip Pip!

Pseuds Corner

Lara Anstruther-Gough-Calthorpe, 24, works for an animal charity. She wants to build a hut in the Himalayas; meanwhile she is learning to play the Conga drums.

Harpers & Queen

... Brahms's Second is not about verdant hills or bucolic swains; it is about the Great Chain of Being, the disappearance of the Great Auk, Harold Macmillan's cat Maxwell, the Harmony of the Spheres, the Alliance and Leicester 12-year index-linked equities package, sex, the curse of Tutankhamun, the Whirligig of Life, the fourth urinal from the left in the gents' loo at King's Cross Station, the hunting of the Snark, the Tesco Five Items or Less (no credit cards) counter, the taming of the shrew, the rise of the vihuelistas in 15th century Spain, the fall of the Ottoman Empire, the electrification of the Soviet Union, the emancipation of the bourgeoisie, total groove.

Program for King's College, Cambridge, concert

FRIDAY: Simplest, most mysterious day of the week. Morning and afternoon I'm writing songs with Gregory, evening and bedtime I'm singing songs with my daughter. No complications. Just love and creation.

PAT KANE (Hue & Cry)
The Scotsman

Aphra Benn was the first Englishwoman to make her living "by her pen", as we used to say. Now nobody makes her — or his — living by the phallic and virile pen. Linguistic and cultural structures no longer combine in exhibiting the exciting transgression, the impudent androgyny, of the man-woman who picks up her pen to write, for the she-writer, like the he-writer, will feed symbols through the word-processor, a brooding matrix-box far more uterine than penile.

MARGARET ANNE DOODY
London Review of Books

Titian painter of flesh and the guts, their rumblings and liquids. Painter of hair and the tamed beast in man. Painter of the skin as an entry or exit — like the shining surface of water for the diver, the surface to which he comes back after his dive to the depths of the body and its hidden organs, comes back with the secret of a personality.

JOHN BERGER
Weekend Guardian

Even the cappuccino in his private dining club, Mosimann's, transcends the simple definition, coffee. The presentation borders on calligraphy as on every cup the chocolate powder sprinkled on top is in the shape of a perfect Mosimann "M".

Profile of Anton Mosimann
Top Rail Magazine

CONTRIBUTORS: Pearl Pelfrey, Katherine Steele, Marion Forsyth, David Milsted, Jonathan Mason, Peter Wood.

£10 paid for entries

NOOKS and CORNERS

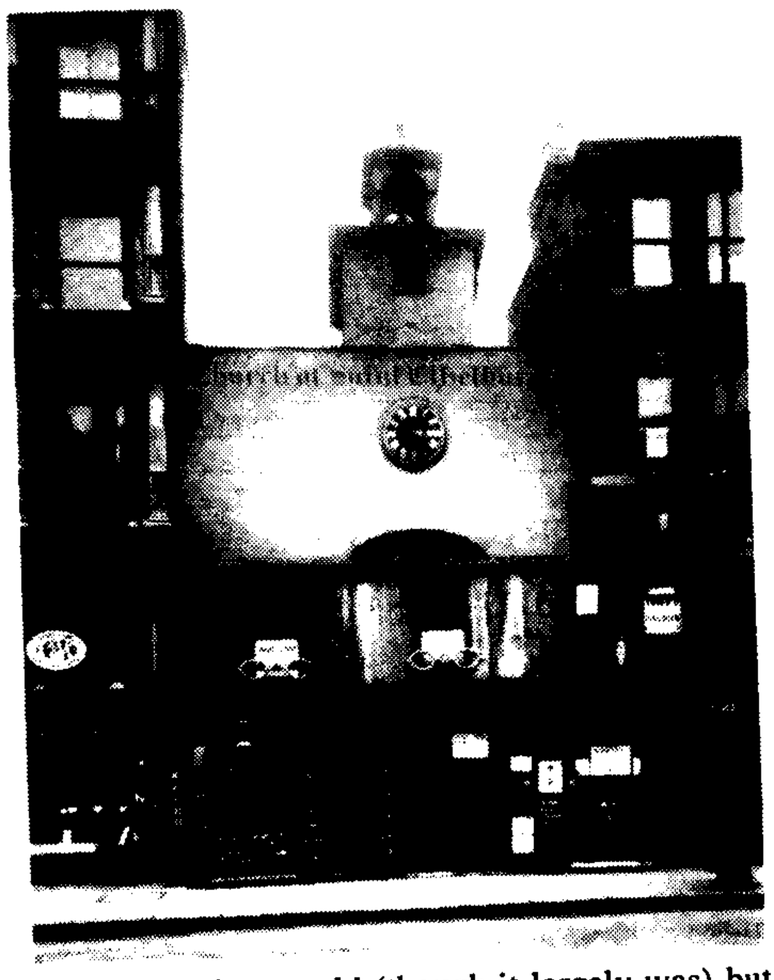
SO FAREWELL, then, St Ethelburga's Bishopsgate! You were a dear little building. Few who passed along Bishopsgate ever bothered to enter, but those who did found a dark, mysterious and lovely interior.

Only 54 feet long and 25 feet wide, it was the smallest surviving City church; but, divided by a central arcade, it seemed bigger and its medieval glamour was enhanced by a fine screen by Ninian Comper. In consequence, as John Betjeman wrote, "the effect now is what the churches of the City must have looked like, which were not rebuilt after the Fire". But the best description was given by good old Ian Nairn, who said St Ethelburga's was "one of the sweetest things in the City: a little medieval church sitting up as pert as a sparrow or a typist between two monuments to commerce". It was.

And now it is gone. Poor St Ethelburga's managed to survive the Great Fire, and the Union of Benefices Act of 1860 which did for so many Wren churches, and hateful Bishop Winnington-Ingram's projected holocaust of City churches in 1919. It even escaped damage in the Blitz; but now this harmless little survival of medieval London has been half flattened by the IRA.

My picture shows the church before 1932 when, stupidly, the picturesque additions which concealed the facade were demolished and the plaster picked off to expose boring rubble-stone to please the boring archaeologists. And now that stone is a pile of rubble.

That bloody-minded journalist and founder of the Georgian Group, Douglas Goldring, protested about the removal of "the queer little shops which used to be attached to the facade of St Ethelburga's. As a Londoner I loved them, as my City-born grandfather and great grandfathers did. No one pretended they had architectural significance of any kind. The [SPAB] approved of their being tidied away by the City authorities on the ground that they had been rebuilt not more than a century ago and were therefore not 'old'." We loved St Ethelburga's



not because it was old (though it largely was) but because it was charming.

Do City gents mourn it? They should. But it can be rebuilt. After all, Chelsea Old Church was blown to bits by a flying bomb in 1944 and that good man, Walter Godfrey, lovingly put it back together again. Why not do the same in Bishopsgate? The £55 million which the odious Jacques Attila has spent on his vulgar corporate palace in Broadgate would rebuild St Ethelburga's several times over. The City should do this to show that it has a heart and was not totally corrupted by Thatcherism. To do otherwise is to concede victory to the IRA.

Irish terrorists have as much regard for precious things of beauty and antiquity as they have for human life. After all, they set the roof of Westminster Hall — the finest medieval timber structure in Europe — on fire. It has always been so: ever since they blew up the Four Courts in Dublin in 1922 during the civil war, incidentally incinerating the Irish national archives — the ancient documents that legitimised the Irish nation. More recently, they disfigured O'Connell Street by blowing up the Nelson Monument (where the vandalism was completed by the Dublin Corporation) and burned out Malone House near Belfast, along with the archives of the National Trust.

This wicked terrorism reminds us of the fragility and preciousness of beautiful buildings; but the danger is not just from bombs, whether Irish or German. Since the end of the second world war, St Mary-at-Hill has been gutted by British workmen with blowlamps and St James's, Garlickhythe damaged by a careless contractor's crane, while the interior of St Stephen's Walbrook, most celebrated of all Wren churches, has been inexcusably barbarised by My Lord Palumbo and the Rev Chad Varah (*Eyes passim*). Nothing is ever safe. Perhaps St Ethelburga's soon would have been spoiled anyway, for the slap-clappy congregation of St Helen's, Bishopsgate, had their eyes on it.

That poor medieval church, of course, was damaged by the earlier IRA bomb and is now threatened by God's Own Architect who wants to rip out all the fittings that make it interesting (*Eye* 812). Comper's screen in St Ethelburga's would have been firewood before you could say "Terry Quinlan", while Hans Feibusch's striking 1960s mural (which I was beginning to like) could not have escaped the evos' whitewash.

Such things were products of that Anglo-catholic civilisation which is now a thing of the past and despised by those who have captured the Synod. For as the Church of England falls apart, so some of the finest churches in the land will be made redundant or mutilated.

But St Ethelburga's should still rise again. Architecture is civilisation; a cleared site, like a pile of rubble, represents the triumph of barbarism.

'Piloti'

Sally Deedes

BUSINESS may have been slack for Britain's estate agents in the last couple of years, but the bullying tactics of the bigger agencies — in this case the Woolwich, aka Prudential Property Services — have been holding firm.

John Steward is a partner in Knight and Goodwin, a small independent estate agency in Stamford, Lincolnshire. At the end of last month, an employee of Knight and Goodwin whose own house was on the market, received — like other sellers in the area — a letter from the local branch of the Woolwich.

"Having noticed that your house is on the market with Knight and Goodwin [*other vendors had the name of their own particular agency inserted here*]," it said, "and after obtaining a set of your house sales details, I feel we can generate a great deal of interest in your house for you." The Woolwich went on to claim that it had achieved record sales and had more "sold" boards in Stamford than any other agency. "Presently," the letter continued, "we have on our mailing list 43 buyers we could ring today who are looking for a property in your price bracket." They guaranteed to match or beat the present agent's commission and suggested the vendors terminate their current agreements in order to avoid paying two commissions when they joined the Woolwich.

This blatantly aggressive practice is known as "touting" and is against the rules of the National Union of Estate Agencies. Mr Steward therefore stormed round to the Woolwich to confront the manager, Paul Briggs, who had signed the letter. If this behaviour went on, he threatened, he too could resort to such underhand methods as those employed by the Woolwich.

Knight and Goodwin did *not* send out any letters, and nor did it have any intention of doing so. But the Woolwich did — and 10 days later the following misleading letter was sent to Woolwich clients:

"We felt it wise to write to you and explain certain unethical practices which are currently being used by an agent within this area. Whilst there is always a healthy competitiveness between the various established agents in this area, we feel that the manner in which this particular agent is conducting themselves has taken this to extremes. You will be receiving from this agent, shortly, or may already have received letters advising you that they can market your property and in fact possibly already have a buyer waiting. The latter is almost certainly not the case and the service that this agency can offer can by no means match the commitment that we at Woolwich have backed by our larger Corporate Network of offices."

So, not only is the Woolwich bigger and better, but it also practises sharp double standards with more skill than any other agency.

Bankers

● GOOD NEWS for Barrie Chapman, former managing director of the J.S. Bass group, whose controversial liquidation by Barclays and Ernst & Young the *Eye* has catalogued.

Chapman was declared bankrupt last June for non-payment of £24,000, but his lawyers have now successfully had the order, obtained by joint liquidators Grant Thornton and Ernst & Young, overturned. Even though Ernst & Young called in the big guns — a barrister who has written an influential text book on insolvency — the judge found for Chapman and awarded costs in his favour.

O·B·N·K

'He's a loser's loser'

Cartoon on front page of Sunday Times on subject of Sunday Times competitor

Lord St John of Fawsley, chairman of the Royal Fine Art Commission, said yesterday: "I welcome this brilliant, imaginative and socially concerned initiative by the Queen."

The Times (on the Queen's plan to open Buckingham Palace to the public)

Submitted by Mehran Sharmini, Nicholas Lloyd-Owen.

£10 paid for all entries put forward for the Order of the Brown Nose.

EYE TV

Martyn Lewis

(BBC1)

MANY of those who have publicly ridiculed Martyn Lewis's call for more "good news" in television bulletins — a group of dissenters which has so far included his BBC colleagues Peter Sissons and Jeremy Paxman — have tried to carve him up with the old hack's saw: "Dog bites man isn't news; man bites dog is."

What they have failed to appreciate is that Lewis's news judgement cannot be contained by this motto. Never mind dog biting man or man biting dog: Lewis believes that "Dog doesn't bite man" is news. Dog, *per se*, is news. As is cat. The great pet journalist of his generation, Lewis has published two books — *Dogs In The News* and *Cats In The News* — which collect moggy and doggy headlines from television bulletins.

The normal grammar of a British news show — with Bosnia and politics up top and the story about the cat with stigmata at the end — would clearly be upsetting to a man with this particular agenda. And so, last week, Lewis cracked and made a speech in Los Angeles — pre-printed in British papers — in which he accused his colleagues of being addicted to grimness, of failing to foreground light, fluffy, squeaky, optimistic news.

The first thing to be said in reply is that most sensible people understand that the word "news" is a diminutive of the phrase "bad news". A bulletin will, inevitably, be a summary of what has gone wrong. This is because bad things that happen are generally a matter of objective fact: murders, explosions, wars, redundancies, deaths. Good things are more a matter of opinion, on the dangerous cusp of government and PR puff: the ends of recessions, increases in optimism etc. Actually, many will argue that, in the very week of Lewis's strictures, rather too much uncritical coverage was given to the "good news" of the alleged recovery from recession.

Secondly, Lewis's main evidence for the popularity of his views is the contention that, among the people he meets in his daily life, it is a common complaint that "the news is too gloomy". Well, given his status as a media-person, it seems a reasonable assumption that the majority of "real people" Lewis has met in the last few years have been the punters who turn out for his reading and signing sessions of *Dogs In The News* and *Cats In The News*. This means that the newsreader has had disproportionate exposure to the most maudlin and sentimental Britons, people who regard the relegation of pets to the "And Finally..." section of *News At Ten* as a serious distortion of the news agenda. Tragically, Lewis has taken their mewings and barkings as representative.

"First the good news– I got a fat cheque for a lecture in America..."

Thirdly, it may well be the case that, even beyond the pet set, there are a lot of people who complain that the evening news menu is grim and depressing. It is probably true that people often do say: "I can hardly bear to watch the news these days." What Lewis cannot seem to get into his talking head, however, is that when they say this they are generally lamenting the state of the world, not complaining about the news selection of the media.

Similarly, people often object at the unfair lottery of health, with some dying young and some old. But does Lewis think this means they think the hospitals should be closed? It would be a fool who, in times like these, found the news easy to watch. But it would be a bigger fool who blamed the newsgatherers for this state of affairs.

Finally, what is most depressing about Lewis's outburst is that it is so clearly a variant of the right-wing rhetoric currently disfiguring the BBC. (Of all the corporation's news presenters, ITN-import Lewis is the one least likely to be thought a pinko by the government.) This is true both in the sense that a "good news" agenda will almost inevitably benefit government and business — speak of the jobs created, not those lost; speak of the profits, not the worrying ethical quibbles — and in the sense that the sub-text of what Lewis says is that the news should be audience-led.

The argument runs: if there is evidence that the BBC news programmes are alienating people, then clearly they should be made more user-friendly. But news, surely, is the area of broadcasting in which there is the greatest justification for broadcasters ignoring the demands and objections of portions of their audience.

The willingness of the *Washington Post* to pursue the Watergate story during the early period when it was considered arcane and boring by its readers and vindictive and speculative by its rivals remains one of the great lessons of journalism. The willingness of the British broadcast media to report from the former Yugoslavia at a time of public apathy stands as one of journalism's great credits.

Martyn Lewis — that great academic of canine and feline studies — should understand that, in the dog days of the world, the last thing one wants is pussyfooting television journalism.

'Square Eyes'

MEDIA NEWS

THE lunacies of Producer Choice, the BBC's new internal purchasing system, continue to distract staff from their main function, ie programme-making.

One harassed editor recently received a bill for £9 from maintenance... for fixing a light bulb in an empty socket. He was told that was the cheap rate: *replacement* of a light bulb would have been £23 as that requires a new "contract". Four out of 10 maintenance men have now settled into desk jobs where they maintain the essential billing paperwork that odd jobs require.

The vision of the BBC sinking under a mass of triplicate invoices for trifling sums at a time when John Birt's declared aim is to cut bureaucracy and channel more resources into programme making is only one result of Producer Choice. Staff are convinced that in the longer term the new market-oriented system is designed to rationalise the closure of support services such as information research and film archive, as well as the more basic transport, health and maintenance services. "By pricing them above the level of producers' slashed budgets they're ensuring no one uses them," claims one director. "The rigged market will decide."

What is really curious, however, is the BBC's inability to swallow its own medicine in the real marketplace beyond its walls. Commissioning editors have been horrified by freelancers' and contractors' efforts to charge their time on the cost-effectiveness, "by-the-minute" methods now being encouraged by the organisation. One film researcher ringing up an ITV franchise's archive was horrified by the rates being demanded for a couple of minutes' footage. "Actually, it's what you charge us," she was told. "We just quote the prices on the BBC rate cards you send us."

JOHN BIRT'S plans to rob the nation of Radio 4 on long wave and replace it with 24-hour pontificating by hacks has taken a surprise step forward.

One argument of the "anti" faction has been that Radio 4 currently broadcasts the World Service on long wave between the end of the shipping forecast and the medley of patriotic tunes that start it again in the morning. World Service is not audible in much of the country, and the concession to put it on Radio 4 was won by the Voice of the Listener pressure group.

If it goes, insomniacs and global news enthusiasts will be up in arms and could again march on Broadcasting House with balloons.

Meanwhile Arnold Miller, goofy head of a diminishing empire in eastern England, has come up with the less-than-bright but Birtian idea of putting World Service on local radio between midnight and 6am.

His stations — from Northampton to Norwich — already abandon local coverage after 7pm and take "regional" programmes, so that Southend is entertained with the daily events of Kings Lynn and Peterborough. After midnight, local radio takes Radio 2, which if stupefying is at least entertaining. Against the wishes of his managers, who have listened to World Service and pronounced it worthy (ie dull), Radio 2 will go and

CORPORATION STREET W.12
An everyday story of Broadcasting Folk
"IT'S THE ANNUAL MEETING FOR SUBMISSIONS BY DEPARTMENT HEADS FOR IDEAS..."
BBC
SO WHAT IDEAS HAVE YOU GOT?"
"WE'LL HOLD IT IN A POSH COTSWOLDS HOTEL AND WASTE VAST AMOUNTS OF LICENCE PAYERS MONEY!"
"Trebles and a lower slaughter of standards all round!"
"SOLD!"
Ken Pyne

HACKWATCH No 44: *Ariel*

THE BBC'S weekly in-house newspaper, *Ariel*, is popularly known at the corporation as *Pravda*. However appallingly John Birt behaves, *Ariel* can be relied upon to take a positive view.

Ever since the new DG took office at the start of this year, the paper has been packed with such headlines as PROGRAMME-DRIVEN BBC TO BE 'RESPONSIVE TO ALL' and propaganda features extolling the virtues of Birt's "Producer Choice". His lecture to the Royal Television Society at the end of March was reprinted in *Ariel* as a special eight-page supplement. Small wonder that a survey of more than 2,000 BBC staff last month revealed that 74 per cent thought *Ariel* was management propaganda, and 67 per cent felt it painted too rosy a picture of what is happening in the BBC.

Nevertheless, there is one section of *Ariel* that gives a vivid and all-too-credible portrait of what Birt is doing to the BBC: the Sits Vac column at the back of the magazine. Since the beginning of the year this has been full of advertisements for weirdly-titled jobs in the vast new management bureaucracy that Birt is creating — at the same time as programme-makers are having their budgets squeezed. Here are just some of the exciting posts advertised:

5 January: Management Accountant. Corporate Internal Communications Officer.

12 January: Manager Finance and Business Planning. Head of Business Management. Management Assistant.

19 January: Commercial and Business Policy Chief Adviser. Head of Strategy Evaluation. Head of Business Information. Business Development Manager. Administrator Finance and Personnel. Facilities Assistant Resources.

26 January: Contract Development Manager Finance. Management Accountant Education. Information Coordinator. Projects Manager. Secretary Resource Executive.

2 February: Directorate Secretary. Business Manager Policy and Planning. Manager Corporate Affairs. Product Accountant Finance Dept. Personal Assistant to Adviser to DG. Secretary Human Resources Dept.

9 February: Business Performance Manager Financial Plan. Management Assistant to Resource Executive. Secretary to Resource Executive.

16 February: System Accountant. Senior Assistant Management Accounts. Business Development Executive. Assistant to Head of Accommodation, Planning and Projects.

23 February: Head of Operational Resources. General Manager BBC Property Services Division. Independent Programme Finance Manager. Advertising Systems Manager. Assistant Product Accountants. Senior Assistant Finance. Assessment Coordinator Corporate Management Development Personnel Directorate.

2 March: Personal Assistant to Deputy Director-General. Business Manager Radio One FM. Assistant to Manager Resources South. Administrative Assistant Finance TV Service. Finance Assistant Operational Resources World Service. Assistant Manager Recruitment and Training Unit. Assistant Business Affairs Executive.

9 March: Assistant Head (Premises) Facilities Management World Service. Assistant Business Affairs Executive BBC Video. Head of Finance Engineering Services Engineering Finance. Project Analyst Business Systems. Secretary to Head of Policy Liaison Policy and Planning. Project Coordinator COPPER Replacement Project ("the new Human Resources system which will replace COPPER"). Assistant to Manager Network Resources South.

16 March: Head of Internal Audit. Head of Internal Resources World Service. Business Manager Scotland. Marketing and Planning Coordinator. Communications Resource Coordinator. Finance Systems Administrator.

23 March: Product Development Manager. Assistant to Controller Resources Regions. Servicing Assistant Supervisor. Personnel Manager Corporate Affairs.

30 March: Independent Programme Finance Manager. Business Manager/Accountant BBC Northern Ireland. Management Assistant Radio Sport. Clerk to Administrator Finance and Personnel. Assistant Banking and Cash. Assistant to Head of Resources BBC North.

6 April: Coordinator Charter Renewal Communication Strategy Corporate Affairs. Assistant to Business Manager. Senior Account Programmer. Assistants in Charge Book-Keeping and Payments. Assistant Managers Finance TV Planning and Strategy Department. Business Development Assistant. Senior Team Assistant Director of Personnel Office. Assistant to Chief Personnel Officer Central Directorates. Team Assistant Effectiveness Project. Secretary Human Resources Dept. Facilitator Producer Choice Staff Awareness. Support Team Producer Choice Staff Awareness.

20 April: Business Manager Resources BBC Wales. Management Accountants. Senior Clerk Payments and Analysis. Taxation Assistant Corporate Finance. Finance Clerk Resources and Equipment.

27 April: Senior Assistant Corporate Finance Dept. Head of Resources BBC South. Head of Resources BBC Wales.

And so it goes on. In his RTS lecture, John Birt argued that in the past "creative freedom" at the BBC had been frustrated by "form-filling bureaucracy", but that from now on "the organisation will be shaped above all by the decisions of our network controllers and our programme makers". What, then, are the Facilitators of Producer Choice Staff Awareness and the Management Assistants to Resource Executives supposed to be doing?

World Service will take its place on Radio Cambridgeshire, Radio Peterborough, Radio Norfolk and probably others.

Repeat that over the country and two things will happen: local radio will carry world cocoa prices and news of small uprisings in Khartoum instead of what its founders intended. And miraculously Birt will claim that "local" (now a pointless word) listeners have their World Service in the clarity of VHF.

Roll on rolling news on Radio 4 is the cry.

I-BSkyB

Billy Crystal's annual finest hour is hosting the Oscar ceremony, which is shown only on Sky, so terrestrial-TV viewers miss one of the wittiest stand-up performances of the year.

IAIN JOHNSTONE
Sunday Times

SKY TV last night scooped both the BBC and ITV by buying new teen series Paradise Beach.

It is tipped to be the hottest show for youngsters since Beverly Hills 90210, which Sky One also owns.

'News' item in the Sun

What did I watch on my week off? Sky, Sky and more Sky.

GARRY BUSHELL
The Sun

CONTRIBUTORS: Daniel Hyland, Graham Kerr.

An occasional column for which readers are invited to submit Sky-plugs masquerading as news items in Murdoch papers. The usual £10 will be paid.

WHAT an influential fellow is William Shawcross at the BBC.

Bosses there insisted that Shawcross's *Assignment* programme on Cambodia for BBC2 should be brought forward a week — to go on air a few hours before John Pilger's documentary on the same subject. The purpose, declared one top BBC Birtist, was "to spoil Pilger's audience".

Another purpose, also dear to Birtists, may have been to comfort all those in the British and American governments (and their intelligence services) who are seeking to establish Pol Pot's Khmer Rouge as part of the "peace process" in Cambodia. In its press release for Shawcross's programme the BBC highlighted an interview he conducted with students at Phnom Penh university. One student told him: "I want Pol Pot and the other Khmer Rouge to join us to lead the country towards peace."

Shawcross introduced his viewers to the man who had organised these students for his cameras, one Julio Jeldres, whom Shawcross described as "director of the Khmer Institute of Democracy... a think tank of Phnom Penh intellectuals and students". Somehow Shawcross forgot to give details of Jeldres's political history. Jeldres supported Prince Sihanouk when the prince backed Pol Pot but abandoned the prince when the Sihanouk-Pol Pot alliance collapsed. Jeldres, an Australian, also had links to the Pinochet dictatorship in Chile (where he was born) and is a director of *Khmer Conscience*, which is published in California.

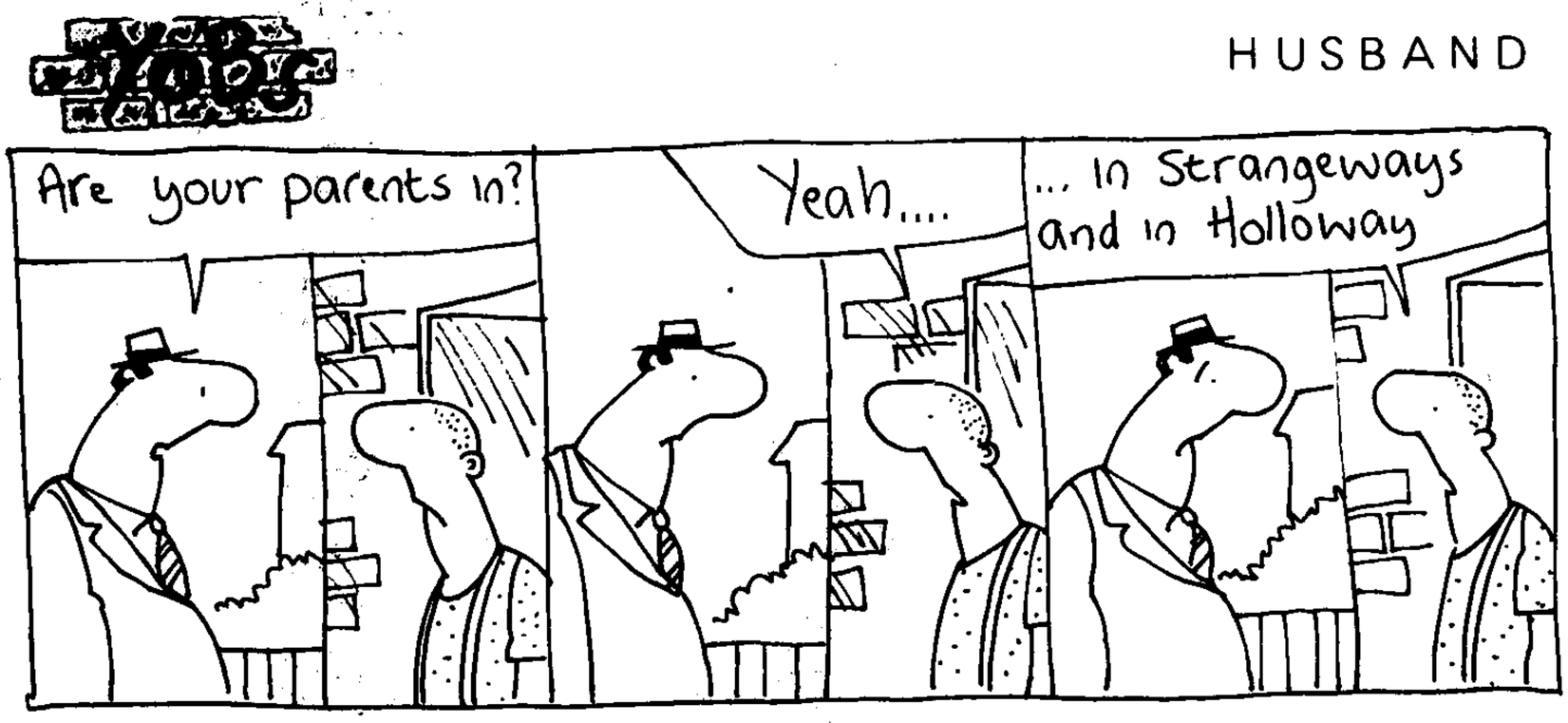
A recent issue described Pol Pot's sabotage of the UN peacekeeping operation in Cambodia as "legitimate and responsible".

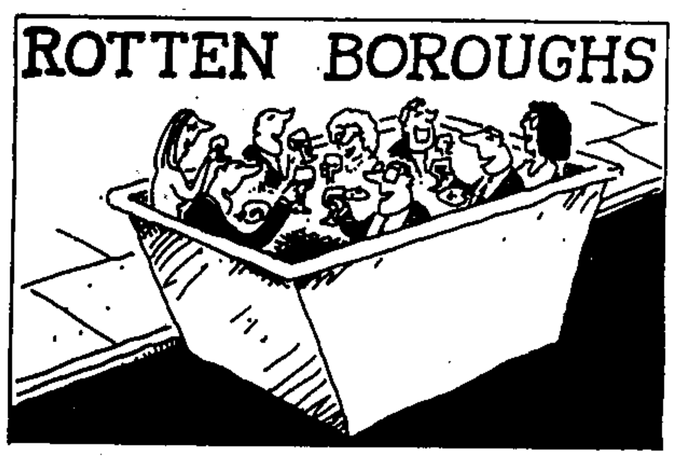
TV DEALERS are puzzled by the sudden demand for redundant BSB squarials, which hitherto they have been dumping in skips.

BSB's Marco Polo satellites were switched off at the end of last year, one of them flogged off cheap to Norway. The reason for the sudden interest is that the Kleenex-sized dishes can pick up the high-powered French satellite TDF1/2 when plugged into the latest generation of Pace and Amstrad satellite receivers.

The French satellite carries several unscrambled channels, including the non-stop pop music station Monte Carlo Music. Compared with the grainy MTV on Astra, Monte Carlo Music offers high quality pictures and digital stereo sound.

In sex-starved, prudish Britain, however, the real plus for viewers is France's Canal Plus. At weekends it switches off its scrambling and serves up generous portions of Euro porn.





RICHMOND

THE normally very green and pleasant south-west London borough of Richmond-upon-Thames has scored a spectacular own goal in an attempt to economise on the weeding of its streets.

Rather than pay people to do the job, the council thought it would save money by spraying its leafy lanes with two chemicals, Imazapyr and Glyphosate.

It apparently did so in ignorance of Forestry Commission advice that the former should not be used near trees because it is absorbed through the ground and attacks roots. Sure enough, trees all over the borough started to wither and die and up to 15,000 may be doomed.

Now council taxpayers of the distinctly less green borough are going to have to find £50,000 to plant replacements.

HOUNSLOW

A BRILLIANT cock-up has forced London's forgotten borough to close down all its adult vocational courses.

Every year Hounslow council's education officers submit a funding application to the government's further education funding council quango. This year, however, Hounslow submitted two sets of figures: one for £222,427, and a hastily-recalculated application for £420,000.

Why the £200,000 difference? The Labour-run council forgot to include a figure for employing teachers or running premises! After realising their error, panic-stricken council bosses tried to enlist local Tory MP Nirj Deva to sort out the mess, asking him to try to ensure that the further education council met Hounslow's higher bid. Naturally they failed to tell Deva why they had submitted two applications.

When they were rumbled council leaders desperately tried to point the finger at the government and Whitehall, blaming them for cutting Hounslow's grant. The council received the lower figure, drastically reducing the opportunities for further education in the borough.

BIRMINGHAM

THERE are jobs for the boys a-plenty in Birmingham, so long as they are socialist councillors or *apparatchiks*.

A bizarre web is unfolding in the city's employment resource centres and voluntary groups, where Brum's few thousand Labour party members appear massively over-represented.

Take the Birmingham Tribunal Unit, for example, a voluntary group supposed to help people claim social security, housing and other benefits. To fund its staff and HQ the unit receives a yearly grant of £130,000 from the council's central executives department. But furtive details of another separate grant of £16,990 to pay for a "disability rights officer" have now emerged.

Who is this officer? None other than Raghib Ahsan, the very left-wing and very able-bodied councillor for Sparkhill, whose only handicap is a voice that sounds like a knife being dragged across a plate. His grant has always been made separately by the social services department, which ensured that it did not appear on the annual public list of voluntary body grants.

Coincidentally Ahsan is a powerful broker of votes in Sparkbrook, the seat of both Roy Hattersley and the city council's Labour leader, Sir "Dick" Knowles. Strangely the same constituency also features the Sparkbrook Employment Resource Centre, one of nine across the city. Economic development chairman Albert Bore (*see accompanying article*) recently claimed these were a huge success with more than 3,300 clients for the four busiest. That sounds impressive — until one realises that it works out at a massive four customers per centre per day.

Perhaps the key to their guaranteed political future is illustrated by the Sparkbrook centre, which is run under the auspices of the sinister British Kashmiri Association (see *Eyes passim*). Coincidentally, the BKA is run by the appalling Mirza family, who also control the local Labour party. It used to employ Khalid Mahmood, a Labour councillor and son of Sparkbrook Labour chairman Sabir Mirza, until he eloped to Kuwait with his cousin. Now it employs Mirza protegé Tony Kennedy — who has just been selected to stand for Mahmood's former Sparkbrook ward.

Is nothing sacred in the pursuit of jobs for all?

DOWN ON THE FARM

with 'New Muckspreader'

SO PROUD is James Taylor of prosecuting wicked polluters of our streams and rivers that he keeps a montage of photographs in his car, illustrating recent "victories".

Taylor is a "quality officer" for the national rivers authority (NRA) and, on 13 April 1992, he sought to notch up another victory when he sampled a ditch near Ardleigh reservoir, near Chelmsford.

Claiming that the ditch was polluted by undiluted effluent from a nearby egg farm manure bay, Taylor presented his case to Chelmsford magistrates earlier this year. They considered the incident so serious they fined the farmer, Wally Wragg, £3,000 and awarded the NRA £1,600 costs.

However, on closer examination, there was something distinctly odd about Taylor's evidence. The pollution count of the effluent stored on the farm was indeed astronomic — 25,183 milligrams per litre. But the ditch count was a trifling 17.7. The court was not told of this curious discrepancy and all attention was focused on the massive pollution potential of the farm. That was enough to convict Mr Wragg.

The zealous Mr Taylor did not, therefore, have to explain why the pollution count of the water in the ditch was remarkably similar to that from domestic septic tanks serving houses nearby, which the NRA conveniently failed to sample. Nor did the court consider the possibility that Mr Wragg's effluent may not have reached the ditch at all, but may have drained away on his own land.

Obviously Mr Taylor was in no way trying to improve the NRA's ever-rising prosecution figures. But if he had been, as he and his colleagues have found there is no easier way to impress magistrates than to light on another "wicked polluting farmer".

THE meat hygiene division of MAFF, part of chief vet Keith Meldrum's growing empire, has come up with an ingenious ruse.

Confronted by 150 slaughterhouses that have refused to pay outrageous veterinary inspection fees — between £40-65 an hour — Meldrum's henchmen have suggested to local authorities, which collect the fees, that they should refuse to give inspected meat the stamp that is necessary to sell it.

MAFF is not apparently troubled by the fact that local authorities have a legal obligation to stamp meat if it is fit for human consumption. It seems that Meldrum's department is hoping to trap unwary slaughterhouses into selling unstamped meat — so they can be prosecuted for breaking exactly the same regulations MAFF is inciting the local authorities to break.

EVER-POPULAR John Gummer and his acolytes have been touring the country trying to sell his crazy IACS scheme to bemused farmers. This requires a complex form to be completed by 15 May, accompanied by maps showing exact sizes of every field, in hectares, to two decimal points.

Curiously, Gummer did not bother to ascertain, before he launched his *Domesday Book* scheme, whether the necessary maps, at up to £33 a time, were available. Robert Clow, managing director of John Smith and Sons of Glasgow — "the largest Ordinance Survey agent north of High Barnet" — has pointed out that the 1:10,000 maps Gummer requires don't have field numbers on them. Furthermore, most OS field areas are given in acres, and, over the past few months, OS has actually been withdrawing microfilms of 1:2500 maps which do have the required field numbers and sizes. Instead, agents have been issued with microfilm giving field boundaries but without numbers and sizes.

Maybe Mr Gummer's intention was to give the Ordinance Survey the bonanza of a lifetime; for IACS will boost OS turnover this year by 20 percent (£9 million). Or Gummer may have been deliberately making the thing so difficult that no farmer will apply for a subsidy. God bless Gummer, for saving us all that money.

MURKEYSIDE

WARNINGS that Liverpool's sacking of council workers would cost city taxpayers dear (*Eyes* 769 & 775) were confirmed last month when an industrial tribunal decided that they had all been dismissed unfairly.

The city council must now pay compensation estimated at £1 million to the 105 workers who were made redundant, including gardeners and members of the security force the tabloids once dubbed "Hatton's army".

They were all sacked under a notorious "points plan" devised by Pat Archer-Jones, the then personnel director. Jones herself spent less than a year in the job, and the *Eye*'s prediction, on her departure in August 1991, that Liverpool's citizens would "pick up the tab" for her hit-list has been vindicated.

The tribunal's decision was good news for people like John Kendrick, who had dared to take two months' sick leave three years before he was sacked. Mr Kendrick had donated one of his kidneys to his son, but such deeds only added "points" towards his dismissal, regardless of the years of service he had put in.

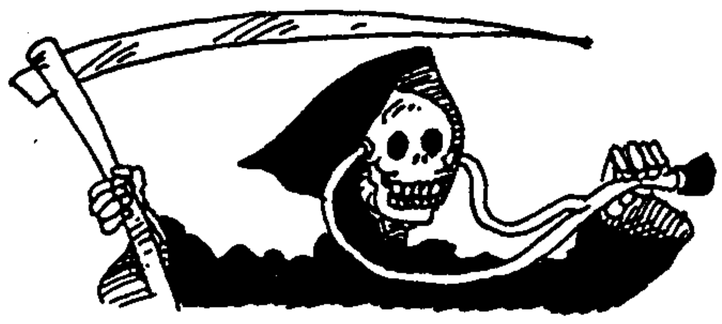
The 15-page tribunal judgment produced a damning list of council failings. In the hot seat defending Harry Rimmer's rotten-rump administration's record on this matter is personnel and equal opportunities (*sic*) chairman, Coun Alan Dean. Reputed to have more shoes than Imelda Marcos, Dean suffered a heart attack two years ago during a meeting where the redundancies were discussed, and was carried out of Liverpool town hall on a stretcher wearing an oxygen mask.

Although "Dicksie" recovered his health, he has failed to become leader of Liverpool council or a prospective Labour candidate in one of Murkeyside's parliamentary constituencies. Moreover, recent events may cause him *renewed* stress. During the tribunal it was revealed that one of the workers unfairly dismissed had been going out with Dean's wife before he was fired.

Old Macdonald

ALBERT

GOOD GRIEF!! THEY'RE PLANNIN A WITHERING BY-PASS! IT RUNS ROUND THE FAR SIDE OF THE VILLAGE, AN' THERE'S A DAMN GREAT ROUNDABOUT ON OLD FRED'S MEADOW!
NEVER!
INVESTMENT IN INFRASTRUCTURE
AN IT WONT STOP THERE RENE! BEFORE YOU KNOW IT THEY'LL BE BUILDIN' OUT OF TOWN SAINSBURYS, McDONALDS AN' DO-IT-BLEEDIN'ALLS! THOSE FIELDS WILL BE COVERED WITH CHICKEN McNUGGET CARTONS AN' CURLY WURLY PACKETS!
WELL, THEY'RE NOT GETTIN' AWAY WI' IT! I'LL FORM A PRESSURE GROUP! LOBBY PARLIAMENT. LAY IN FRONT OF THE BULLDOZERS IF I HAVE TO!
I'LL GET THE BLOODY THING MOVED OVER HERE IF IT KILLS ME!



DOING THE ROUNDS

THE 45 casualties who survived the Bishopsgate bomb were treated promptly and expertly by staff at St Bartholomew's accident and emergency department. Survivors will no doubt be comforted to know that the government plans to replace the department with a primary healthcare centre, open only from 8am to 8pm (*Eye* 818).

● **LONDON'S King's Hospital** has brilliantly massaged its accounts in the run-up to trust status. On 31 March it produced balanced books to support its claim to financial independence. But on 1 April, with trust status safely assured, debts of more than £5 million miraculously appeared!

In an attempt to save money, chief executive Derek Smith has taken managerial responsibility for the cardiac, liver and dental departments away from the clinicians. The hospital is now as dirty, unkempt and ramshackle as ever, and is likely to remain so now that most of the works department has been sacked.

● THE **Wellhouse Trust** in **Edgware** is a fine example of how hospitals are faring in the brave new NHS. The trust was formed in 1991 by the amalgamation of **Edgware** and **Barnet** hospitals, and the name "Wellhouse" chosen "to conjure up feelings of comfort, healthy outcome and security".

By March 1992 the trust had clocked up a £1.4 million deficit and was renamed "Shithouse" by staff. The debt had risen to £3.5 million by the summer when 68 jobs were lost, recruitment was frozen and a quarter of Barnet hospital's surgical wards were closed. Hundreds of non-urgent operations were cancelled, making a mockery of the government's charter guarantees.

Recently the Shithouse lost a contract for 6,000 dermatology patients to **London's Royal Free hospital,** and the proposed £100 million redevelopment of Barnet hospital has been postponed indefinitely. Now casualty services in Barnet are to be halved and the staff wage bill is being cut by 8 percent to reduce the current deficit of £5 million. On a brighter note, trust chief executive Laurence Irvine has resigned.

● **WATFORD General Hospital** is trying to reduce its £3.2 million deficit by providing a "core" emergency service from 1 May. Urgent surgery will be done, but routine operations will only be available to patients of fundholding GPs. Two of the four main operating theatres will be closed, cutting activities by a third... and there are still 48 weeks of the financial year to go.

● **LANCASTER Acute Hospitals Trust** is axing 40 jobs and closing an orthopaedic ward to lessen its £1.5 million deficit. The trust recently lost £750,000 worth of contracts from **South Cumbria health authority** and paediatric surgery at the **Lancaster Royal Infirmary** has been abandoned at weekends. As acting chief executive Barrie Abram put it: "We are very exposed and in an uncomfortable position this year if a catastrophe should come about."

● **WESTMORLAND general hospital** in **South Cumbria** has come up with some novel cost-cutting exercises to soften its £2 million deficit. Heating has been reduced to "minimum comfort standard", corridor lights have been dimmed by two-thirds, cleaning has been stopped in areas not used by patients, menu options have been cut, stores requisitions are urgent-only and staff appointments and overtime have been frozen. However, the hospital's financial troubles may soon be over — it has just become a trust.

● THE **Alexandra Hospital** in **Redditch** has dispensed with 140 staff and cut the number of rheumatology beds at nearby **Highfield hospital** to try to recoup a £2 million deficit. Operations have been repeatedly cancelled, including that of an elderly lady who was sent home half-anaesthetised. Unit manager John Parkes took the blame and has been relieved of his duties.

● **LONDON'S** showpiece **Chelsea and Westminster Hospital** opened six months late, cost more than £230 million and caused 24 other major capital projects to be cancelled. Now further cutbacks have forced the departure of a consultant surgeon who has left to find a hospital which can afford to do operations.

● **OXFORDSHIRE RHA** recently spent £5 million on three brand new cook-chill catering facilities in **Oxford, Northampton** and **Reading** before realising that the Oxford outlet could easily serve the whole region. Reading and Northampton have now been rendered useless.

● DIABETIC services at the **Mid Essex hospitals** are facing severe cutbacks. Plans to employ a much-needed extra diabetic liaison nurse have been shelved and out-patient nurses at **Broomfield hospital** are not being replaced. The waiting time for urgent out-patient appointments is eight weeks and will be further worsened by the closure of the clinic at **St Peter's hospital** and the threatened termination of adolescent, ante-natal and paediatric clinics. As one consultant put it: "These actions will have catastrophic effects on the care of diabetic patients."

"You call it 'community care'. I call it leaving my mother outside to freeze to death"

Nearby **Black Notley hospital** is also in financial crisis. X-ray facilities have been removed, the orthopaedic surgeons have lost their status as a teaching centre, four of the six orthopaedic registrars have left, there is a 40-week wait for an outpatient appointment and a further 18-month wait for surgery. A third of the general surgery beds have been closed, non-emergency admissions have been cut by 59 cases per consultant per month and an eye ward has shut and transferred to a nearby private hospital. The hospital has now lost all its spare capacity and even emergency admissions are threatened. Meanwhile, **Essex Family Health Service Authority** is already cash-limiting its 1993/4 budget to county GPs, with no money available for computer or premises improvement grants.

● Those who doubt the government's commitment to the privatisation of the health service might wish to attend "Private Capital in the NHS", a two-day conference at the Forte Crest Bloomsbury Hotel in London on 24-25 June. The guest of honour will not be Virginia Bottomley — nor indeed anyone from the department of health. It will be the financial secretary to the *treasury*, Stephen Dorrell. The conference offers "an excellent chance to network with some key NHS and private sector players in the NHS". Interested? Call 071-779 8837.

M.D.

LAMBETH

LOONY Lambeth, already missing £10 million, is wasting more money trying to replace borough chief executive Herman Ouseley, new chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality.

Although 150 people were sent application forms for the job, the round of interviews yielded no one suitable — much to the chagrin of Henry Gilbey, Lambeth's director of operational services, and Bev Burchell, director of education, who were both rejected.

To date the cost of not appointing a new Lambeth boss — buying advertising in the quality press, expenses for councillors on the interviewing board, and so on — totals about £8,000, plus £8,000 every time the recruitment process is repeated, as it has to be.

Of course these sums are barely discernible to a council that can lose track of £10 million of public money.

Meanwhile Ouseley's colleagues at the CRE must fear the worst, given his CV. From 1979-81 Ouseley was head of Lambeth's race unit (last year, as Lambeth's chief executive, he abolished it.) On leaving the unit he became principal race relations adviser for Red Ken's GLC from 1981-1984, the GLC being abolished in 1985. Ouseley then returned to Lambeth as assistant chief executive from 1984-86, a post he also recently abolished following a council resolution. From 1986-90 he worked for the Inner London Education Authority, first as director of education then as chief executive. The ILEA was wound up in 1990.

Should the CRE also fall by the wayside, Ouseley should be encouraged to return to Lambeth again and finish the job off properly.

"Phew! What a relief!"

WEST YORKSHIRE

HOT ON the heels of Leeds council undermining local coal miners by joining the dash for gas (*Eye* 818), councillors on the Labour-controlled West Yorkshire fire authority have decided to follow suit.

Ignoring pleas to support the miners, the county's fire chiefs have voted to switch from coal to gas to heat the service's Bradford HQ. The decision led to the curious example of Tory councillors accusing Labour of undermining the coal industry — while Labour said the switch was simply good housekeeping.

LUVVIES

1.00 pm to the Olivier Theatre for the Olivier Nominations ceremony. Foyer full of chatterboxes. Pity there isn't an award for them. I am certain to be one of the nominees for that! Lots of good pals there: Michael Covenay, Michael White (glowing with his new hit musical Crazy For You), Peter Shaffer, beloved Rosemary Harris, Tony (the prince of the box office), Robert Crowley (busy as a bee designing every production in London and as adorable and funny as ever). All very exhilarating.

Arrived rather late to see my accountant, Mr Green, who doesn't seem to be too daunted by the state of my rather disastrous financial affairs. However he wants another meeting in depth next Tuesday. Dum, de dum dum, dumm!!!

ROBERT STEPHENS
Guardian Weekend

Submitted Francis Harvey.

An occasional column featuring gems from the acting profession. £10 paid for entries.

Letters

Being patient

Sir,

In your reference to this Trust and Newcourt Hospital (EYE 816) you omitted to mention why the patients had moved out.

The reason, quite simply, is that they moved into a £1.5 million purpose-built, fully equipped, single-storey nursing home, completed by this trust earlier this year.

Newcourt Hospital was a former country mansion and was never designed for the purpose for which it was ultimately used, namely to provide long-term care for patients with a serious physical disability.

The decision to convert Newcourt to offices makes sound economic sense. It's cheaper than renting commercial office space!

Yours faithfully,
ALAN CONNETT,

Public Relations Manager, Exeter & District Community Health Service, Exeter, Devon.

Match point

Sir,

I am enclosing for your inspection the outer shell of a box of Big Ben matches which I recently purchased locally. You may observe as I did that they claim to be "Made In Croatia". I have also noted that no English company has dared to put its name on the pack, though maybe that info may be gleaned from the bar code which I am not able to decipher.

Perhaps you will be able to find time to investigate this matter and advise us through your columns. It has also occurred to me that the only thing Croatia has to export is the wood from trees splintered by shells.

I am pleased to leave this matter in your capable hands.

Yours sincerely,
MARTIN SMITH,

London SE15.

Down side

Sir,

A friend has drawn my attention to the references to me in Backbiter in your issue of 23 April on page 6.

The information given you by your anonymous correspondent about the Twyford Down land is quite wrong. The facts are these. The Twyford Down land was not "handed over". It was the subject of compulsory acquisition, the notice to treat being dated 27 February 1991. I retired both as warden and as a fellow on 14 November 1987, when the last public inquiry relating to the M3 extension had not even been completed, and 2 yrs and 3 mths before the inspector's conclusion was made known.

Backbiter's last paragraph refers to a GUARDIAN *article in June 1992, Backbiter implying that this article alleged that the foreign office and ministry of defence supplied me with "confidential" documents to boost my case against Count Tolstoy. The truth of the matter is that I had access to the same files and documents as Count Tolstoy, that we exchanged lists of documents and the actual documents when required and that none of them, other than my personal records, were then treated as confidential. It is also the fact that at no time did Count Tolstoy or his legal advisers complain that they could not get at the files they wanted, most of which Count Tolstoy had examined some time before, when writing his books.*

A casual reader might have read into the juxtaposition of the Twyford Down allegations and the incorrect analysis of the GUARDIAN *point, that I bought the government's supply of confidential documents by handing over voluntarily the Twyford Down land. You will now see that such an allegation is wrong on both counts. No documents were confidentially shown to me other than my personal records; and the land was not handed over but compulsorily acquired 15 months after the end of the libel trial. There is no connection between the M3 extension and the libel trial. You might like to correct the impression that I have become £1.5 million richer as the result. In fact Count Tolstoy has not yet paid me anything by way of damages or costs. Would you not agree that the best way of setting the record straight is to publish this letter in a reasonably prominent position?*

I would like to sign as Lord Allalongtimeago, as you called me in those amusing accounts of the trial, but that might be too anonymous, so I sign

Yours sincerely,
ALDINGTON,

Ashford, Kent.

"Hi, honey! I'm home!"

Cobblers

Sir,

Piloti (818) is wrong. Glasgow's new St Mungo Museum was not "hastily cobbled together". It is the product of a lifetime's museological thought. The candle sticks in it are Hanukahs and the "discarded old glass" is just the stuff Piloti rages about being lost from medieval and nineteenth century buildings.

As for cobbles, well there ARE *seven-ton boulders in Yasutaro Tanaka's Zen garden. But Piloti can't mean them. No, the only thing that's cobbled together here is, exceptionally (I'm gracious enough to admit), Piloti's piece.*

Yours faithfully,
JULIAN SPALDING,

Director, Art Gallery and Museum, Kelvingrove, Glasgow.

Smokers' coffin

Sir,

Re Letters 818 and the contribution from Mrs J.S. Hatton.

It comes as no surprise to this reader to find out that smoking will prevent the onset of the ravages of old age. Unfortunately this is mainly due to the fact that most smokers die before reaching 60.

It is also unfortunate that Mrs Hatton chose not to inform your readers that she is a director of Forest Ltd, the company behind the so-called pressure group, backed by the tobacco industry, that tries to promote smoking as a healthy pastime and an expression of freedom, while drawing a veil over the 300,000 or so annual deaths in the UK from smoking-related diseases.

Yours sincerely,
ANDREW SOUTH,

Hemel Hempstead, Herts.

Slightly foxed

Sir,

Re "Hunt News"

If self-appointed politically correct shock troops were to attempt to occupy your local McDonald's on a busy Saturday on the grounds that "meat is murder" your correspondent would hardly express surprise if at some point the patrons' response became a tad over-heated. Yet your Reynard displays constant wonder that urban day-trippers who deliberately attempt to disrupt a carefully regulated, perfectly legal and (yes) morally defensible rural pursuit with which they happen to disagree are not met with smiles and warm camaraderie from the long-suffering locals.

I always understood that the ultra-humourless who believe that they alone have discovered the key to the earth's salvation were to be featured in Pseuds Corner, not as the stars of their own dedicated column where, week after week, they manage to appear as the completely innocent victims of random violence that somehow never-ever occurs as a result of their own physical intervention or provocation.

Orwell would have loved it.

Yours sincerely,
B. MATTHEWS,

North Yorks.

Lookalike

Larkin

Diamond

Sir,

Have other readers noticed the beady-eyed resemblance between the late fogey poet Philip Larkin and the early yuppie columnist John Diamond? As the writings of both are so remarkably preoccupied with sex, it seems possible that they might be related in more ways than one.

Yours musing, as ever,
ENA B. HOROVITZ,

London EC2.

Child care

Sir,

Your correspondent, Peter Brown, states "the link between babies' positions and cot deaths had been established some five years earlier" than our campaign in 1991 (26 March).

This is not true. As our free factfile on the subject indicates, studies of sleep position had started as early as the 1960s, but evidence of a strength deemed sufficient to act upon was not available until 1991. Even now, interestingly, many countries dispute whether the evidence is strong enough to justify a campaign, including the US where there is still no sleep position campaign.

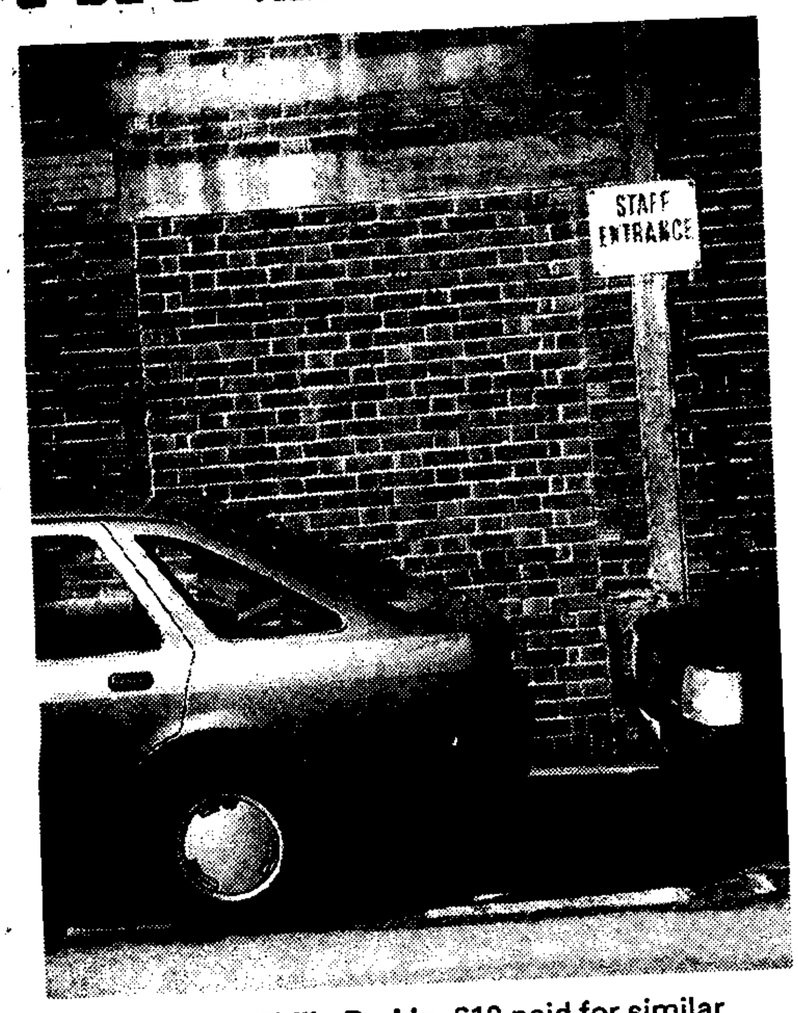
As to Mr Brown's second point, about the absence of British standards for chemical substances added to cot mattresses, since there is no substantiated evidence that such substances cause cot death, we have no particular role to play in this. However, as a general principle we would support the government report's recommendation that the need for such additives be carefully considered.

Yours faithfully,
JOYCE EPSTEIN,

Secretary-General, The Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths, London SW1.

I-SPY

Vauxhall Street, SW9



Submitted by Philip Berkin. £10 paid for similar submissions. *(SAE required for return of photographs. No transparencies.)*

Shopped

Sir,

Media News, EYE *817, mentions that Anne Diamond crossed the TV-am picket line. She surely did, but so did Anne Robinson (and a few other devout leftwingers, I might add).*

Yours faithfully,
PHILIP BRADEN,
(ex-ACTT Deputy Shop Steward, TV-am Shop)

Hong Kong.

Sorry States

Sir,

As an American, I wish to apologize for Camille Paglia.

Yours faithfully,
JOHN T. DURKIN,

Armore, PA.

Articulate

Sir,

Your readers may be interested to know that Helga Graham's article about Saudi Arabia, which you refer to in the 23 April edition of PRIVATE EYE, *was published by the* LONDON REVIEW OF BOOKS *on 22 April.*

Yours faithfully,
NICHOLAS SPICE,

Publisher, London Review of Books, London WC1.

Bored of Directors

Sir,

EYE *818, MPs for Hire.*

I note that all the MPs you list who are raking it in as consultants or directors to privatised companies are Conservative. I also note that this was a fact omitted in your hit list. Is that because it's too obvious a point to bother making it?

Yours faithfully,
CATHY MERCER,

London SE13.

● *Yes. Ed.*

Serial fillers

Sir,

I wonder if any other readers have noticed the striking similarity between the lookalike competition in Alan Fraser's Diary in the DAILY MAIL, *and the ongoing lookalikes in the* EYE*'s much-praised Letters pages.*

Are they, by any chance, related — or is the MAIL *just devoid of originality?*

Yours sincerely,
M.J. FROST,

London SW9.

PS: Fraser's Diary now blatantly copies Colemanballs as well, with a "Quote of the Week" corner.

Colemanballs

£10 paid for contributions

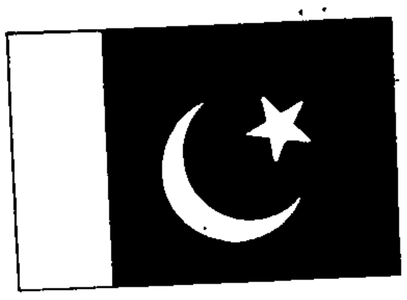
"Ian [Snodin] and I have both been out injured. He's put on weight and I've lost it and vice versa."
RONNIE WHELAN, BBC
(S.P. Redfern)

"It's a shame half-time came as early as it did."
GORDON DURY, BBC
(K. Hatfield)

"In the first Grand Prix in the 30s at Donnington there was an unprecedented crowd."
MURRAY WALKER, BBC2
(Richard Nash)

"If you say 'charity work' nowadays it sounds such a double negative."
SIMON BATES, Radio 1
(Colin Semple)

Johnny Walker: *Do you think that if he [Buddy Holly] had lived he would still be as good now as he was then?*
Interviewee: *Yes, because although his career was going through a difficult stage, I'm sure that he wasn't about to crash and burn.*
Radio 5
(Peter Taylor)



Letter from **Islamabad**

from Our Own Correspondent

PRESIDENT Khan is now Pakistan's most hated man — for arbitrarily dismissing prime minister Nawaz Sharif's government, dissolving parliament and ordering fresh elections under special constitutional powers.

Backed by the ubiquitous army, he is being called a "butcher of democracy" while Sharif is seen as a tiger at bay. He was ousted because he opposed Khan's appointment of a new army chief in January and because he had tried to manoeuvre politically to strip the president of special constitutional powers that allow him to sack an elected government for "misrule" — ie because he feels like it.

Sharif battled hard but Khan whittled at the PM's power base from within. In mid-April, via a nationwide broadcast on radio and TV, Sharif accused Khan of trying to topple his elected government by unfair means. The next evening Sharif was gone.

Officials admit that the composition of the current caretaker administration will greatly influence the outcome of elections, as the establishment controls the levers of the electoral machine and won't hesitate to use them.

Benazir Bhutto, former prime minister and head of Pakistan's People's Party (PPP), whose government was also sacked by Khan, had long campaigned for fresh elections after her ousting. She alleged rigging at the "establishment level" to ensure a victory for Sharif. Senior politicians in Islamabad, meanwhile, feel elections may be postponed for at least a year and a national "government of favourites" be cobbled together because our turbulent political and economic situation is not yet conducive to polls. This will benefit Khan, who continues in office undisturbed, and Bhutto's PPP and its allies, who have longer to rob Sharif of the public support he is gaining from being a political guerrilla.

Insiders say a deal has been struck between Khan, Bhutto and the caretaker cabinet, brokered by the army and senior bureaucrats. The aim is a modicum of political stability and the removal of our country from the United States state department's unflattering "watchlist". The deal may include the poll delay option, but everyone believes the establishment, with the PPP and its allies, will try to keep Sharif out of office. The appointment of Asif "Stud" Zardari, Bhutto's hubbie, to the caretaker cabinet lends credence to this.

Another result of Sharif's ousting has been the dismissal of the directors of Pakistan's two most powerful clandestine agencies: the Intelligence Bureau (IB) and the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI), which heads of government use to retain power and influence. Control of the agencies will revert to the establishment (President Khan) — a valuable asset when organising — or postponing — elections.

American influence, meanwhile, is for the first time absent. Washington is accused of amorality in wanting to declare Pakistan a "terrorist state" for sponsoring terrorism abroad and pursuing a "pirate" nuclear weapons programme. Our leaders accuse the US of nurturing terrorism in Peshawar to fight the Soviets, spawning a Kalashnikov culture and drug running to finance the Afghan war.

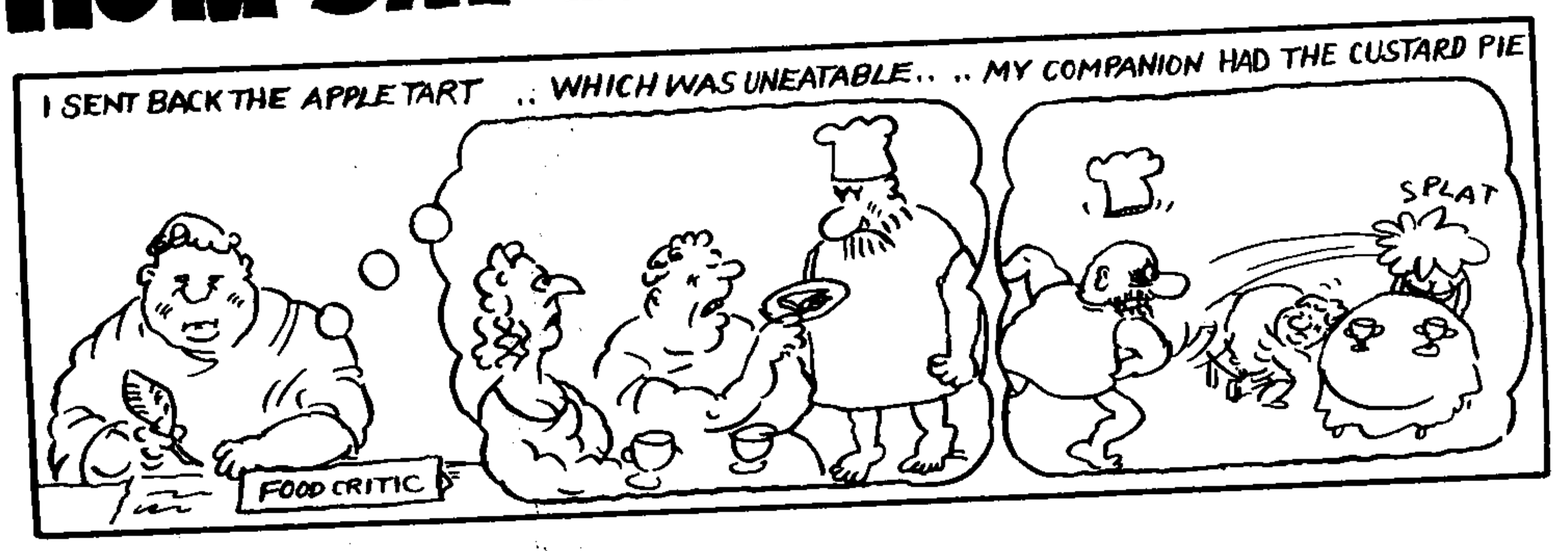
Scores of Islamic fundamentalists from north Africa and the Middle East, who came to participate in the Afghan *jihad*, have stayed on in Peshawar. Many were terrorist mercenaries who were sentenced to death in absentia by their own governments; and FBI agents investigating the World Trade Centre bombing in New York claim to have traced a link to Peshawar.

Underneath the vitriolic anti-US outpourings, our leaders in fact greatly fear the economic sanctions which come into force if a country is declared a terrorist state by the US. All aid, exports and trade with the US or any financial institution where Washington has influence automatically cease. Landing rights of all Pakistan International Airlines (PIA) flights around the world would be withdrawn, and our economy would slide further into bankruptcy.

By dismissing Sharif, under whose misrule we have reportedly come to this pass, Khan and Co hope to send positive signals abroad. But few believe that elections or a new government can weather the crisis.

HOM SAP

BY DAVID AUSTIN



SOMEONE BUYS OBSERVER SHOCK

by our Media Staff
Mark O'Polo-Building

LAST NIGHT it was officially confirmed that a man had bought the *Observer* for a sum believed to be 80 pence.

The man, a Mr Simon Plimsoll, went into his local newsagent last Sunday and offered to take the newspaper away with him there and then.

The editor of the *Observer*, Mr Donald Trelford, at first denied that there was a surprise buyer.

"No one is going to buy the *Observer* as long as I am editor," he pledged. "No one wants this paper and they haven't done in living memory. Believe me that is the way it is going to stay.

"Let's face it, I don't spend the whole of my Friday lunchtime editing this paper in order for people to go round trying to buy it."

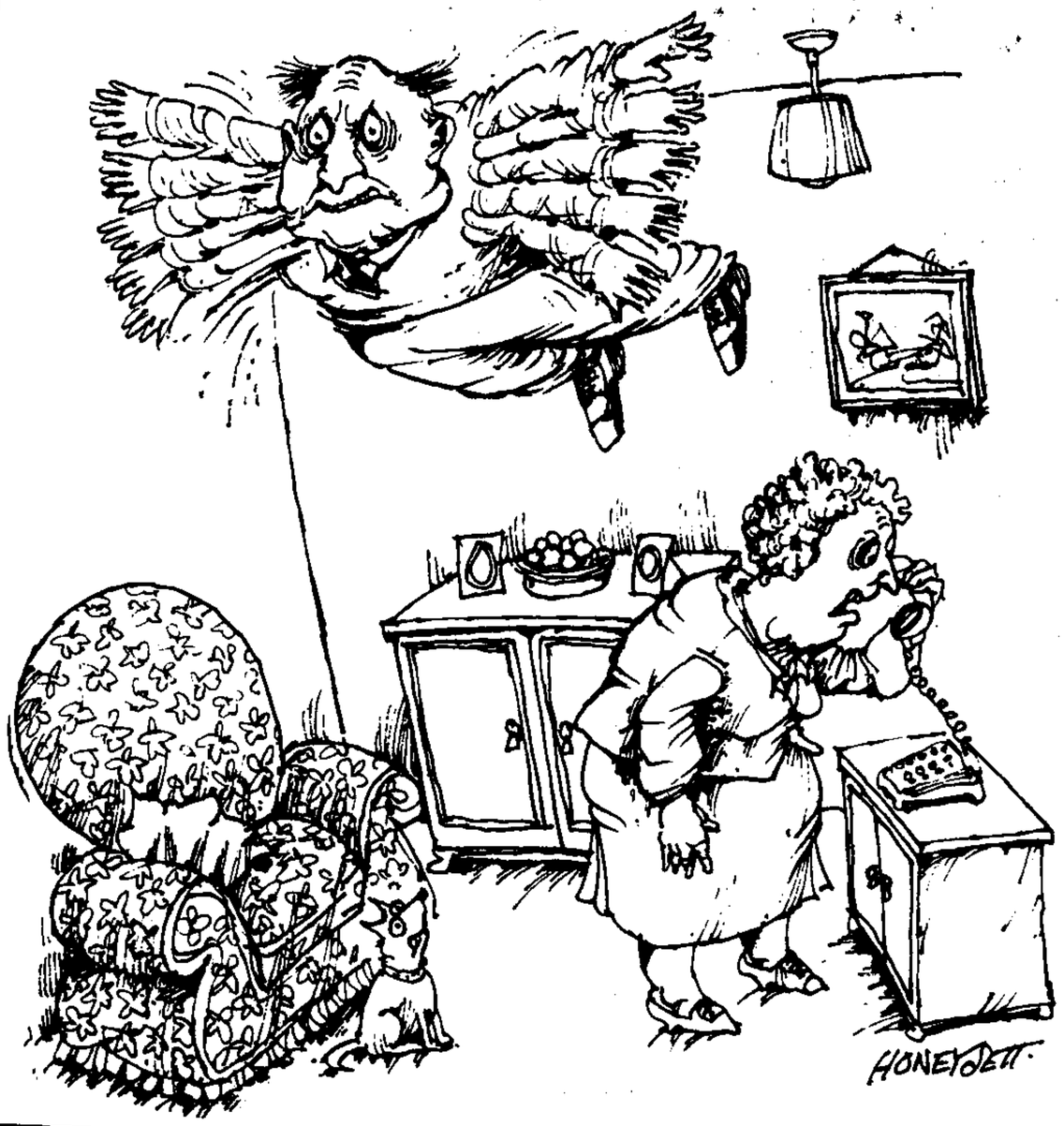
The circulation of the *Observer*, known in the business as "Tiny", has maintained a steady nose-dive in recent years.

Trelford later put out another press statement accepting that someone had indeed purchased his paper and that he therefore felt obliged to resign at once.

McLACHLAN

Note to readers

True Stories is no more, but do please keep sending weird and wonderful tales from around the world. A replacement column will be appearing soon.
£10 for contributions.

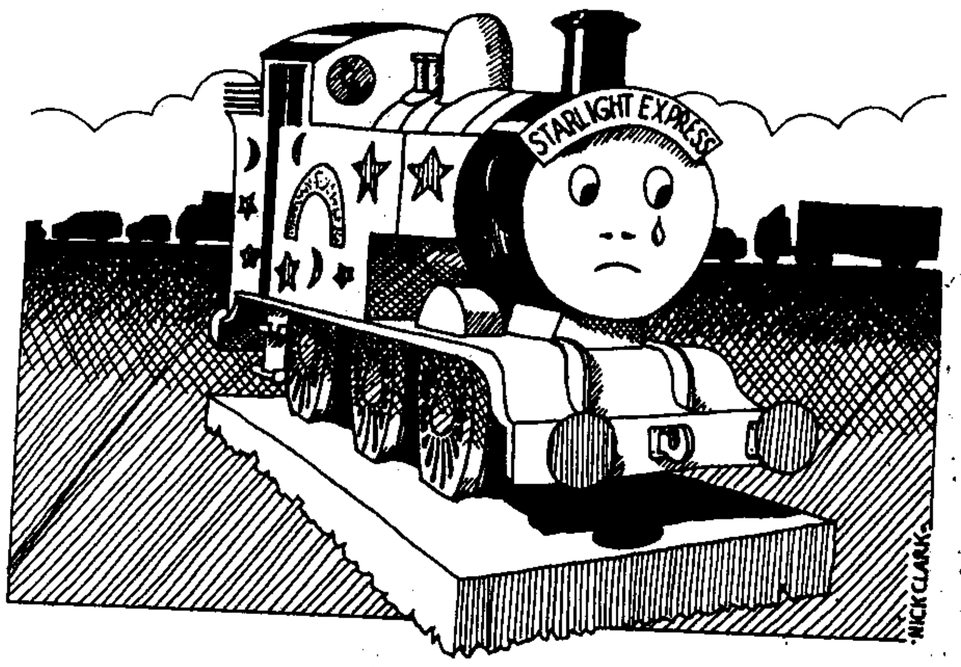


"His pacemaker's playing up again"

THOMAS

THE PRIVATISED TANK ENGINE

Thomas gets his sums wrong



A MAN in a pin-stripe suit approached Thomas as he waited at the terminus station one afternoon.

"Mind if I take a ride, Thomas?" he asked. "I've heard a lot about our, er, your branch line and I'd like to see things for myself before we, er, begin the development programme."

Thomas loved to show off his line to important people, and he chattered excitedly: "As you can see, the terminus is perfectly sited bang in the centre of town."

"Ah yes, centre of town," said the pin-stripe man, taking a clipboard from his briefcase.

"In fact, some people come to the station to do their shopping for socks, knickers and croissants."

"Shopping! Most exciting." The man wrote on his clipboard. They set off, Thomas acting as guide and the man taking notes. "Here's the 1921 signal box — proper little museum piece, eh?" "Mmm... Museum. Interesting."

Then the man started questioning. He wanted to know how much coal Thomas ate each day, and how much it cost. What was his driver's salary? How much did tickets cost?

"And how many passengers do you carry a day?" he asked, his brow severely furrowed.

"Oh, loads," replied Thomas. "Nine hundred at least."

"WHAT?!" yelped the man. "Stop! I order you to stop right here, and turn back immediately."

Thomas was frightened. He obeyed although he knew his passengers would be furious.

The pin-stripe man relaxed as they reversed back up the line. "These are exciting times for your branch line, Thomas."

"Are they?" Thomas was bewildered.

"Yes. In three years' time it will be a smooth, fast dualcarriageway road. The terminus will become 'The Buffer Stops Centre', an in-town indoor shopping complex with ten-pin bowling alley. And there's potential for a substantial residential development where your engine shed is."

Thomas felt sick.

"And that last station we passed will become a roadside taverna and nightclub complex."

How much worse could it get? thought Thomas.

"Annie will be parked there as a bar carriage, and Clarabel will become a linear dance floor. And don't worry, my boy, we shan't be sending you to the scrap heap either. No, you'll be the 'star' attraction, ha, ha, under your new name — 'Starlight Express'."

Thomas winced.

"You'll be the centre of the adventure playground. And you shall have a nice new coat of paint red, green, pink and gold. And the whole complex will be called, let me see ... Chuffers."

Thomas had a nervous breakdown on the spot.

How They Are Related

Naomi Campbell

Madonna
Lady Colin Campbell
Duncan Campbell *(New Statesman)*
Sir Vauxhall Corsa
Duncan Campbell *(The Guardian)*
Campbell's Soup
Campbell's Supermodel
Lloyds Naomi
Naomi Campbell

Man From U2

Who he
Who you
Yoo Hoo
UHU Glue
UB40
Spud-U-Like
Una Stubbs
Yehudi Menu 2
Man From U2

"And you'll love the neighbours – they're dead!"

LEOMINSTER District Council has received the following planning applications:
Old Downton Farm, Downton — conversion of barns into eight agricultural students

Hereford Times

A Doctor Radovan Karadzic Writes

As a mass murderer I am often asked: "Does signing a peace treaty bind me to an international agreement?"

The simple answer is "no". What happens is that the doctor, in this case myself, exhibits psychopathic tendencies mixed with delusions of grandeur or, as we doctors call it, *Serbianis bastarditis abnormalis.*

The only remedy is to threaten to bomb the doctor into oblivion and then try him for war crimes. This may then have the welcome side-effect of the Doctor pretending to be a reasonable human being again.

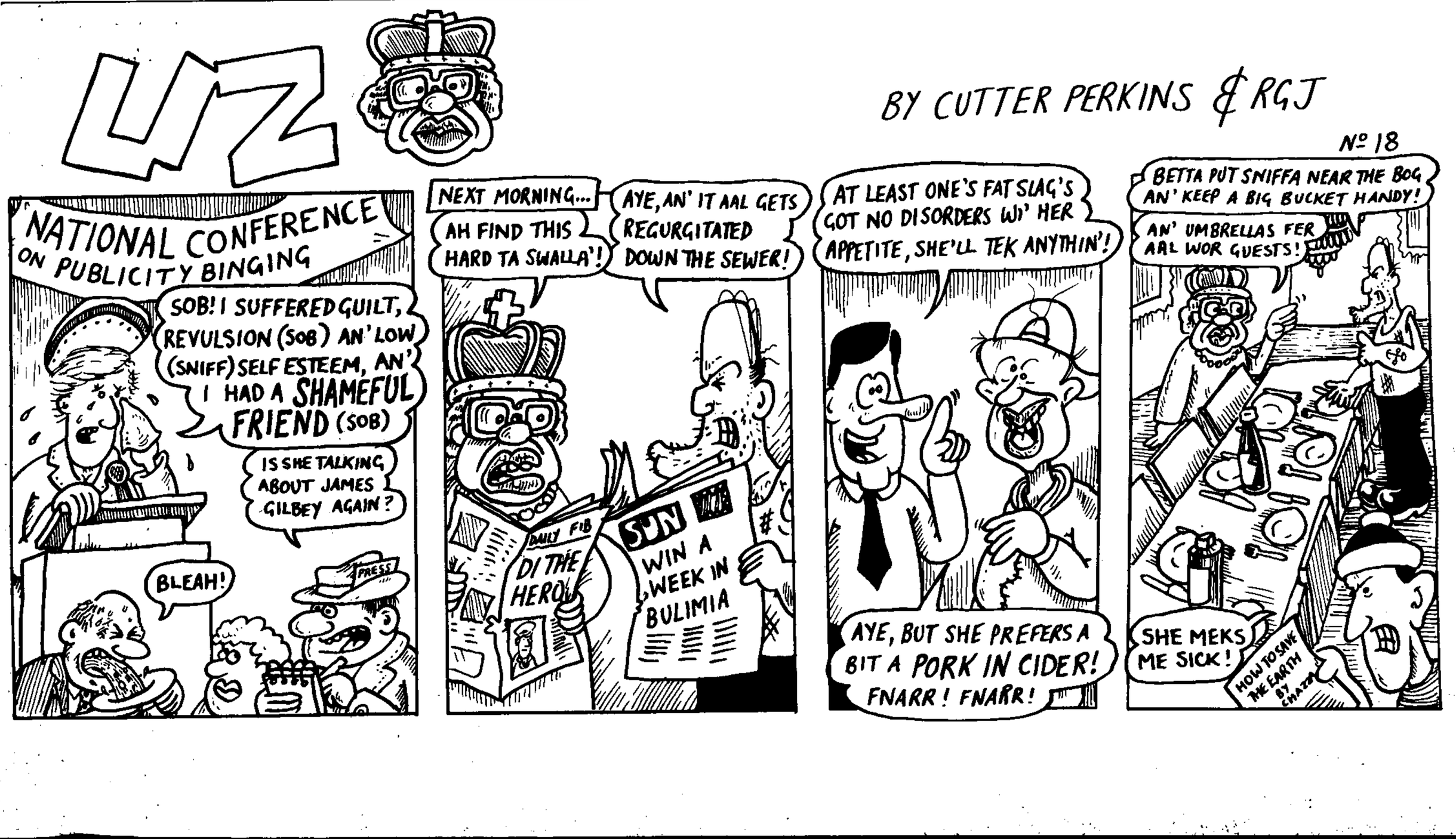
© *A Doctor Owen 1993*

GREAT NURSERY RHYMES REVISITED

A.A. Milne's classic
(now incorporated in the Revised National Curriculum)

They're changing guides at Buckingham Palace,
Christopher Robin and some Japanese businessmen
went round with Alice,
Alice is marrying one of the guides,
I think he's taking the public for a ride,
Says Alice.

© *A.A. Tourist*


WIZ
BY CUTTER PERKINS & RGJ
Nº 18
NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON PUBLICITY BINGING
SOB! I SUFFERED GUILT, REVULSION (SOB) AN' LOW (SNIFF) SELF ESTEEM, AN' I HAD A SHAMEFUL FRIEND (SOB)
IS SHE TALKING ABOUT JAMES GILBEY AGAIN?
BLEAH!
PRESS
NEXT MORNING...
AH FIND THIS HARD TA SWALLA'!
AYE, AN' IT AAL GETS REGURGITATED DOWN THE SEWER!
DAILY FIB
DI THE HERO!
SUN
WIN A WEEK IN BULIMIA
AT LEAST ONE'S FAT SLAG'S GOT NO DISORDERS WI' HER APPETITE, SHE'LL TEK ANYTHIN'!
AYE, BUT SHE PREFERS A BIT A PORK IN CIDER! FNARR! FNARR!
BETTA PUT SNIFFA NEAR THE BOG AN' KEEP A BIG BUCKET HANDY!
AN' UMBRELLAS FER AAL WOR GUESTS!
SHE MEKS ME SICK!
HOW TO SAVE THE EARTH BY CHAZZ

The Secret DIARY OF JOHN MAJOR aged 47¾

Thursday

Spring is here, oh yes. There can be no doubt about it — the green shoots are sprouting on every tree, just as Mr Lamont predicted they would all those years ago! Everybody now agrees that the recession is over — me, Norma, Mr Portfolio and Miss Hogg, who is a trained economist and would therefore know about these things. Only the CBI, the Institute of Directors and a few hundred thousand embittered businessmen refuse to see what is staring them in the face. "Bankruptcy," said my wife Norman in her usual unhelpful way. I sometimes wish she would stick to writing books about opera singers, and not interfere with running the economy, which is Norma Lamont's job.

At our cabinet meeting he was in particularly high spirits and said that he had a confession to make to us all. "I cannot deny it," he said, "but it's true. I am wholly responsible for this recovery. I must take all the blame."

I had to protest that he was being far too noble on this matter, and that I too would like to share the blame for the end of the recession, which of course only came about in the first place due to factors beyond our control, such as belonging to the ERM. I cannot think why Mrs Thatcher forced her then-Chancellor to join that absurd system against his will. That woman has a lot to answer for in my judgement.

Friday

The great recovery is still continuing! That is two days now. So much for my critics! I have decided to take this opportunity to remind everyone in the country just how successful my government has been, and to lay out my vision of the future. Mr O'Donnell has supplied me with a brilliant new speechwriter, a young man called Morris Norris who is going to make my speeches even more exciting that they are already. Mr Norris came in this afternoon with his plans for what he is calling my "Charm Offensive".

"This is going to put you across", he explained, "as decent, sensitive, poetic and above all patriotic, which will really be one in the eye for the Maastricht rebels."

He is right. This is exactly the kind of man I really am, and it is only the press who can keep on pretending that I am indecisive, colourless, dull and in love with Europe. I spent the rest of the day learning by heart the wonderful speech by Mr Norris (with a little bit in the middle by a friend of his called Mr Orwell):

"England, my England. Oh yes. This sceptred isle set in a silver sea. It is certainly a very nice place to live in. England will always be what it has always been. A land of ancient elm trees rising out of the mist. Red telephone boxes. The shadows lengthening over the village cricket ground, as the bells of the nearby church summon old ladies to early morning communion. While beneath the ancient thatch of the village inn, the landlord puffs contentedly at his pipe before being arrested by the environmental health officers, very properly in my view, for contravening Mr Gummer's new EC regulation on Smoking Behind The Bar In Public Houses." This last bit, I have to confess, was added by myself and I thought made a suitably poetic and upbeat ending, because my vision of England includes carrying out European Directives more diligently than anyone else, to show how we are in the heart of Europe, as well as being very English. However Mr Morris suggested that I should save the bit about environmental health officers for another occasion, as it was so good.

Saturday

This morning there was a very loud bang in the distance. When I turned on Classic FM (it was the Black Magic Romance Hour, which Norman likes very much, as they often play our favourite piece of classical music, which is by Rachmaninov), we heard that the IRA had let off another very large bomb in the City of London, causing a not inconsiderable amount of damage. I decided that I would give a lead to the nation by making a very firm statement in my sternest voice.

"Once again," I said, "the terrorists have totally failed. They cannot even plant a bomb in the middle of London without it going off and destroying lots of buildings. Then they run away, thinking they are very clever, just because no one catches them. Well, I have news for these people. Our counter-terrorism policy has worked, and it will continue to work, for just so long as there are bombs in London."

Sunday

I am not inconsiderably annoyed with Mr Clinton for trying to undermine my policy on Bosnia. Ever since my very successful peace conference in London, Mr Hurd and I have been agreed that our policy should be to do nothing. But now Mr Clinton has told the world that he is going to do something. I immediately rang up Mr Hurd to ask him to explain, please, what the Americans think they are up to, suddenly saying that they are going to do something about Bosnia after all. "It's all right, prime minister," he soothed me, "Mr Clinton is only saying that the Americans are going to do something. But in fact they are not really going to do anything at all, so nothing has changed." Foreign Policy is not as easy as it looks. Oh no.

Monday

I am being criticised again over Bosnia, which is in no small measure annoying. It is all very well for armchair critics like Mr Martin Bell and Colonel Bob Stewart to talk tough but those of us watching the war on television realise that it is very difficult to know what to do. I was therefore very pleased when one of our Field Marshals at NATO said: "How can the soldiers know what to do until the politicians make up their minds?" This is precisely my position and I told Mr O'Donnell to make a statement to the effect that I agreed entirely with whoever it was and whatever he was saying.

Tuesday

In a few days' time there is going to be the first real test of how successful my Government has been since my great election victory last year. Sir Norma Fowler, who I would like to emphasise is only a non-executive director of the Group 4 company and therefore has no responsibility for the day-to-day escapes of prisoners, tells me that everything is all right and we are "on course for another historic victory at Newbury".

"But surely," I said, "we picked that hopeless candidate so that we could put all the blame on him when we lost?"

"Yes," said Sir Norma, "but things have got even worse since then and we feel we have to win now or lose credibility."

"We haven't got a by-election there too, have we?" I asked.

Everyone laughed confidently and Sir Norma explained that he was wheeling out all the "big guns" to try and swing the voters.

"All the crowd-pleasers will be there," he said. "Michael Heseltine, Lord Archer, Kenneth Clark and John Patten."

"And when shall I visit?" I asked.

"Sadly you are going to be far too busy," said Sir Norma. Everyone laughed again. This is a very good omen.

By-Election Special

Those Newbury candidates in full

- Julian Yuppie (Conservative Party).
- David Ashgrove-Lover (Old Etonian, Liberal Democrat and Anti-Hunting Party).
- Ron Spart (Labour Party).
- Prof. Alan Skedaddle (Independent Conservative Anti-Maastricht Party).
- R.B.P. Gussett (Independent Conservative Anti-Euro Regulations and Pro-Hunting Party).
- P.F.Q.R. Sibthorpe (Pro-British National Conservative National Referendum On Maastricht Now Party).
- W.F. Deedes (Anti-EC, Pro-Fishing and Pipesmoking In Pubs, Anti-Health Police Conservative Party).
- Miss Whiplash (Pro-Regulation Party).
- Screaming Lord Maastricht (Raving Monster Euro-Loony Party).
- D. Spart (Socialist Worker Pro-Serb Anti-Hunting Party).

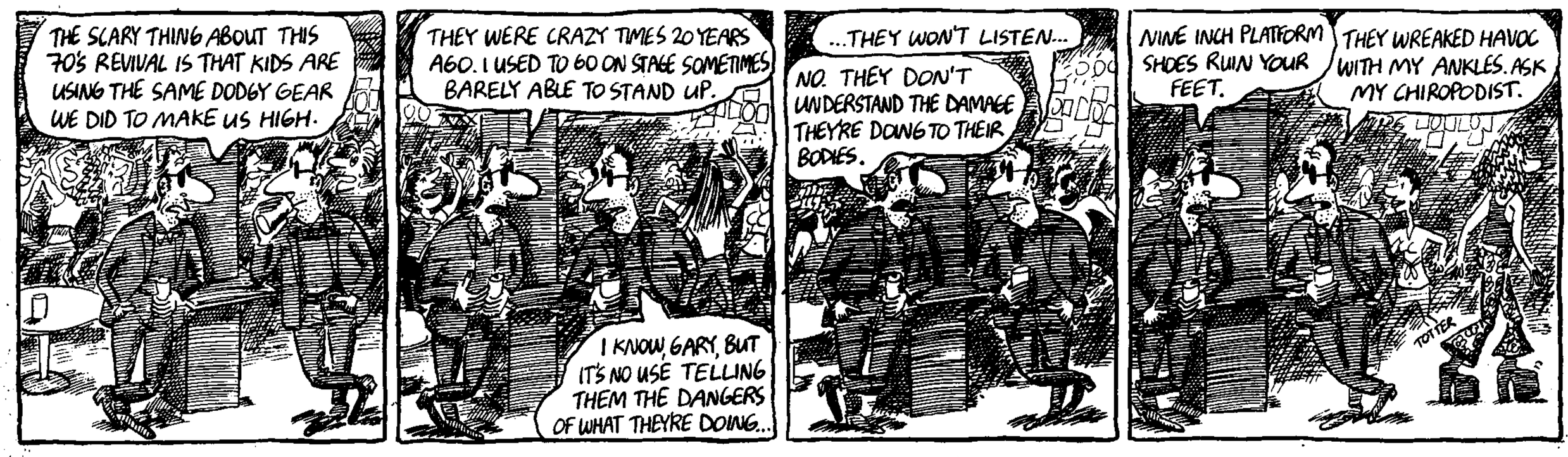
SOUVENIRS OF LONDON

Great Bores Of Today.

"...it's always so depressing all gloom and doom every time you turn it on there's people moaning and groaning about something or other IRA teachers Bosnians drugs unemployment kids all whingeing away why can't they find something cheerful to tell us instead of all that recession Somalia crime figures rape I mean that bloke who reads the news has got a point and it's not just TV the *Today* programme is the worst always carping about something the health service the economy what about a British success for a change? or an honest-to-goodness human interest story there must be hundreds around I don't believe there isn't something good going on like er... er... er... wasn't that awful that business in America where was it? Waco or something... how many of them died? amazing..."

Celeb

LIGGER


THE SCARY THING ABOUT THIS 70's REVIVAL IS THAT KIDS ARE USING THE SAME DODGY GEAR WE DID TO MAKE US HIGH.
THEY WERE CRAZY TIMES 20 YEARS AGO. I USED TO GO ON STAGE SOMETIMES BARELY ABLE TO STAND UP.
I KNOW, GARY, BUT IT'S NO USE TELLING THEM THE DANGERS OF WHAT THEY'RE DOING...
...THEY WON'T LISTEN...
NO. THEY DON'T UNDERSTAND THE DAMAGE THEY'RE DOING TO THEIR BODIES.
NINE INCH PLATFORM SHOES RUIN YOUR FEET.
THEY WREAKED HAVOC WITH MY ANKLES. ASK MY CHIROPODIST.
TOTTER

The Alternative Rocky Horror Service Book

No. 94. A Special Service For The Reception Of An Member Of Her Majesty's Government Into The Roman Catholic Church

The President: Brothers and Sisters, we are gathered here today to welcome our new convert (N or MP) who has freely, of his or her own will, renounced the C of E and all its works.

All: Especially those ghastly women priests.

President: Did you see that one on the telly?

All: Yes we did. Wasn't she awful?

The candidate shall then present himself (or it might be herself) before the President.

President: Do you turn away from Carey and all his heresies?

Candidate: I do, indeedy.

President: Do you abhor the iniquities of Habgood?

Candidate: I refer my right honourable friend to the answer I gave previously.

All: Resign, resign.

President: Order, order.

There shall then be a Reading from the First Book of Gummermiah.

"And there was a certain poor man who dwelt in the land of the Suffolk-ites. And round about him was a garden in which all manner of tares and thistles had sprung up. And his pond was dried up and barren. Nor was there any frog or newt that dwelleth therein.

And, lo, while he slept, there was an miracle. His pond filled with clear water, like unto the brook Shiloh.

Then the poor man rejoiced and gave thanks, even unto Hillsdown Holdings plc who had brought this mighty thing to pass, out of the goodness of their hearts and with no thought of the commercial advantages that might accrue unto them therefrom."

President: Here endeth the reading of the Parable of the Pond.

All: Thanks be to Gummer.

THE INDUCTION

At this point the media may be brought in to witness the Act of Faith. If there shall be any photographers present, the President shall invite them up to the altar for an close-up.

Photographers: Over here, Anne. (Or they may say "Give us a smile, love — can we have a bit of leg?")

The President: Do you acknowledge the Pope is the Supreme Pontiff of the Catholic and Apostolic Church.

Candidate: I refer the honourable President to the press statement which I issued on — (here he or she shall name the date), in which I set out my policy with regard to this one very clearly, and, if I may say so, very fully.

All: Answer, answer.

Candidate: I will not give way.

President: Do you accept the following doctrines? The Infallibility of the Pope, the Treaty of Rome, the Forgiveness of Synods and Proportional Transubsidiarity?

Candidate: I am sure, my honourable friend, that there is much to be said on both sides of all these important questions.

All: You're not in the Church of England now.

There shall then be sung the Te Dium, followed by a celebration of Masstricht.

DISMISSAL

The President: The poor old C of E's rather washed up, isn't it?

All: Yeah.

The President: There's no place like Rome.

All shall now depart to watch ceremony on News At Six.

LATE NEWS

God to leave Church of England

by The Word Staff **Terry Christian**

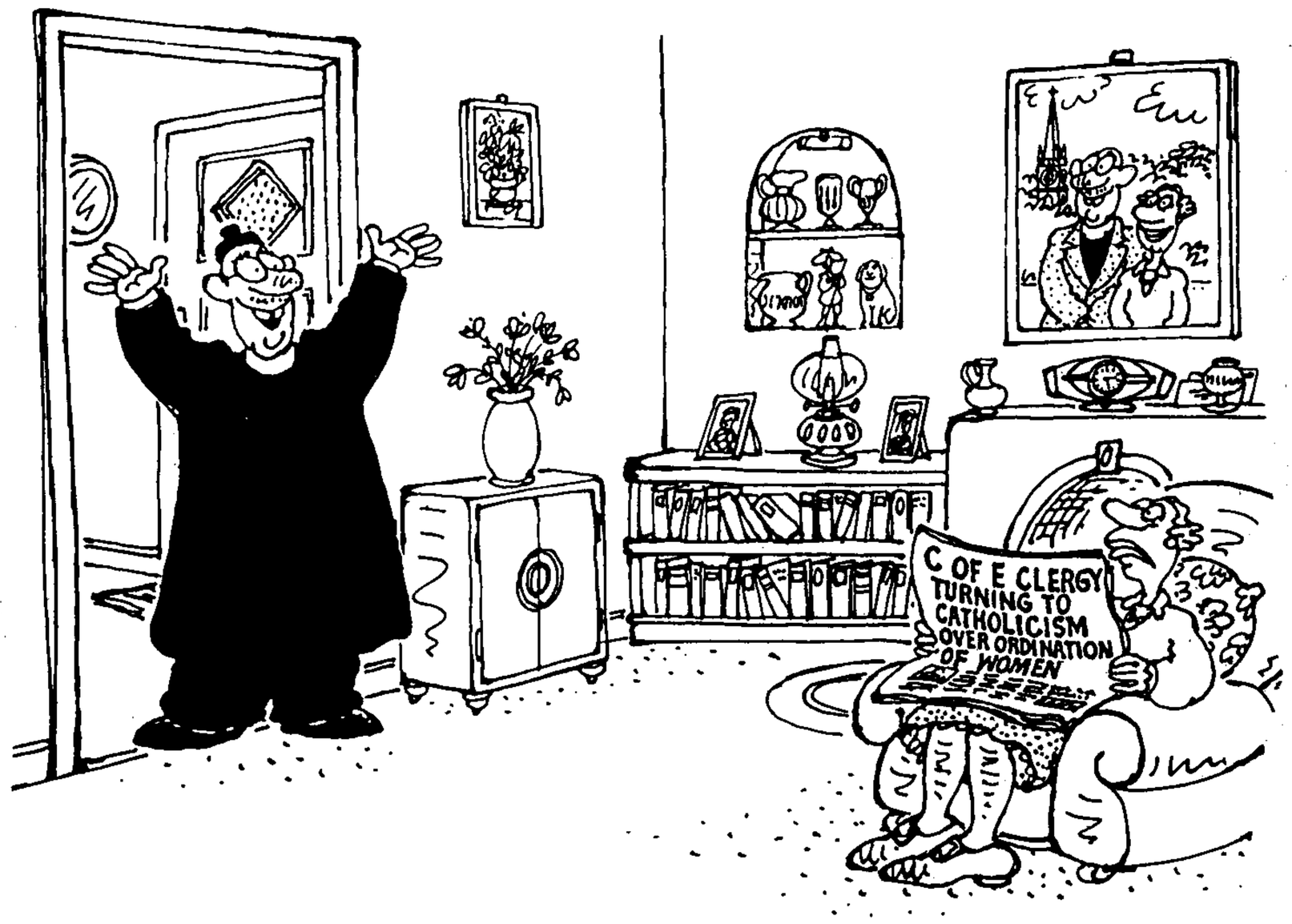
FOLLOWING the precedent set by leading former Anglicans, God has indicated that he too is to leave the Church of England.

Friends of God believe the issue of women priests to have been behind the Almighty's sudden decision to convert to Rome and say that he may well have been persuaded by the arguments of the agriculture minister and pond expert Mr Gummer.

According to sources close to God (TV's Charles Moore), He has been unhappy for some time with the direction the Anglican Church has been taking, and has now finally had enough.

He will be accepted into the Catholic Church on condition that he takes instruction from an expert theologian who can explain His beliefs to Him properly.

A CofE spokesman said: "Losing God is a bit of a blow but after major figures like Anne Widdecombe defecting it's just something we're going to have to live with."



"Hi, honey — I'm Rome!"

'NO TO AIR INVASION' says Foreign Office

by Our Media Staff **John Tuzla**

THE FOREIGN Office yesterday announced that they would be making huge cuts to the BBC's World Service.

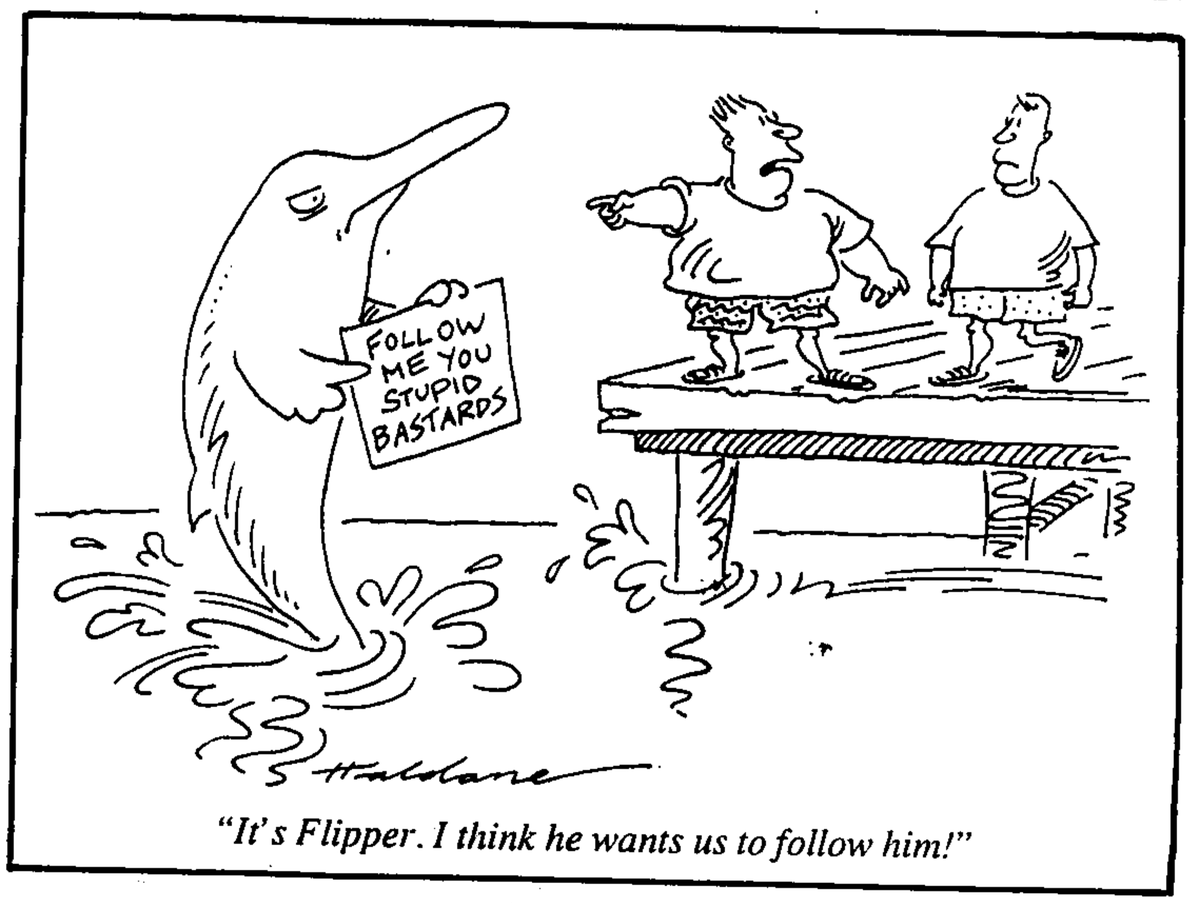
Said a spokesman: "This is entirely in line with our current policy of non-interference in other people's countries. The Government has made it quite clear that it would be wrong for Britain to intervene in the affairs of other nations and sending in wave after wave of broadcasts cannot be justified."

In the House of Commons, Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd defended his decision.

Airtime Strike

"We cannot go around the globe attempting to influence people by bombarding them with unbiased news bulletins. We have no such role in the modern world," he said.

He resisted appeals from Opposition spokesmen, saying that operations such as the World Service were "too costly and too complicated" and that it was much better for Britain to do nothing at all.



"It's Flipper. I think he wants us to follow him!"

TV TONIGHT

Health Inspector Morse

(BBC1. 8.15)

In tonight's episode, tough cookie Sid Morse from the Environmental Health Police drops in to his local pub, the Bell Inn, Aldworth, where he finds the landlord puffing his pipe behind the bar. It doesn't take Morse long to close the pub down under the Food Safety Act, and put the offending criminal behind bars!

Health Inspector
Morse . . . . . **John Selwyn Gummer**
Health Sergeant Lewis . . **Fatty Soames**
Landlord . . . . . **Ian Macaulay**
Bossy Woman in Pub . . **Mrs Bottomley**
Journalists in Pub . . . . . **C. Booker, R. Ingrams, A. Waugh, Bill Deedes, Max Hastings, Uncle Tom Cobbley of the Telegraph**

NEXT WEEK: Morse closes down all the slaughterhouses in England under EC Directive 91/497.

Sound Bites
Quotes of the Week

■ Norman Willis had a tough job which he did extremely well in my opinion.
Rodney Dewberry, Assistant Secretary General, ALPBU

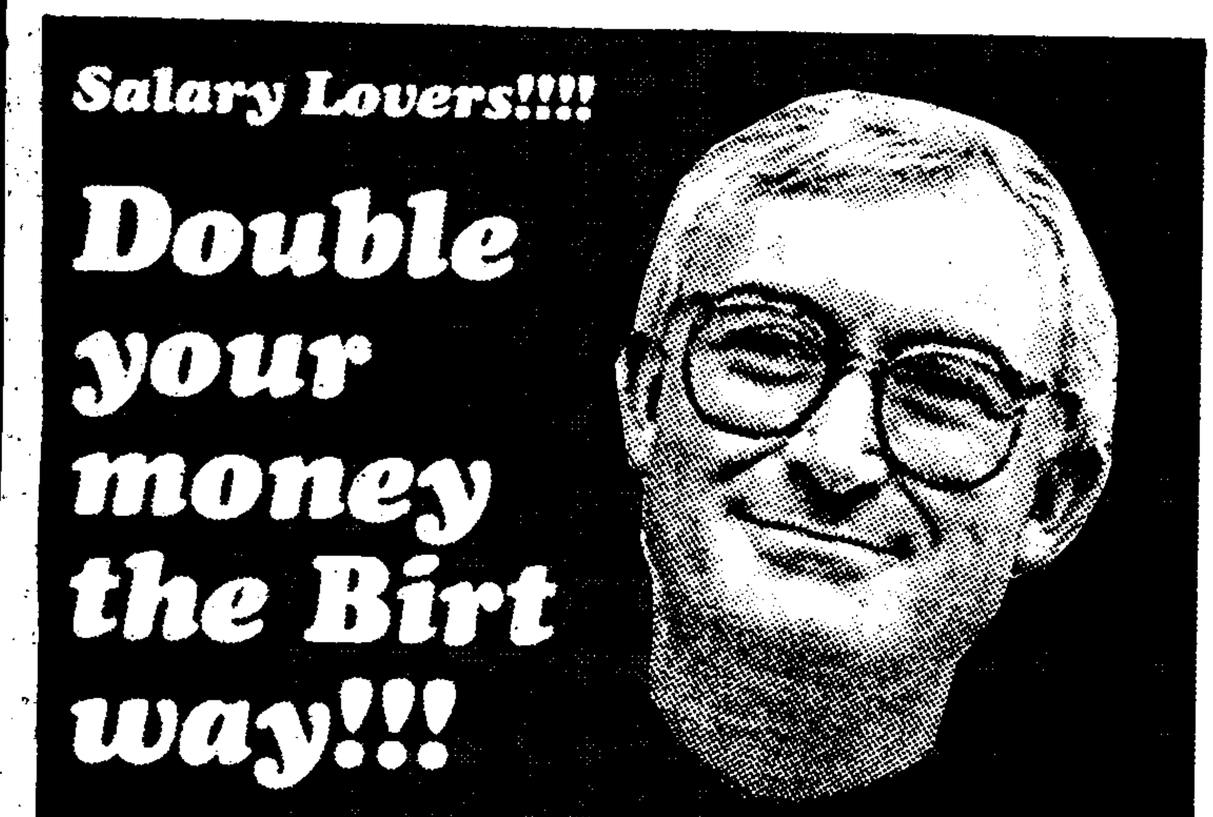
■ I always look forward to touring.
Paul McCartney

■ Back to work after City bomb.
Headline in Financial Times

■ We're going to play a lot of popular music.
Spokesman for Virgin 1215 Radio

■ I'll be very sorry if the paper closes.
Observer sub-editor Phil Weedon

(That's enough dull quotes. Ed.)



TOP financial expert J. Birt sets out the three easy steps towards doubling your salary overnight!

It's so easy it can work for any senior executive. All you have to do is:

1. Use your position as a top-ranking executive to hire two subordinates, and award them much larger salaries than your own.

2. Go in front of the board and point out the obvious anomaly that your subordinates are earning much more money than you are.

3. Demand that the board should correct the anomalous position immediately by awarding you a vast increase.

4. Hey presto — your salary is doubled!

For full details of the J. Birt Path to Riches apply to the BBC (Birt's Business College), Forgan's Rise, Hussey, Berks.

WARNING: This transparent racket can work only in large unaccountable corporations, e.g. the BBC.

*"Oh, Doctor — how **awful** to be expected to diagnose symptoms at a dinner party!"*

TEARS AS KNEE QUITS

Football Legend bows out

by **E.I. Erewego**, Our Man On The Terraces With The Cold Pineapple Pop-Tart And The Flask Of Cadbury's Chicken-Flavour Highlites Drink

THE bouquets of flowers piled high against the wrought-iron gates of Neasden Bridge stadium told their own story. The simple messages on the floral tributes summed up the story of thirty controversial years in the life of the man they call Mr Football — "Good riddance, Ron", "You owe me fifty quid", "Buy your own drinks in future".

For this was the day that soccer's supremo, the 59-year-old Ron Knee, made his final exit from the club that he had made his home.

Fans (Sid & Doris Bonkers) came from all over Neasden to pay their respects.

"I came here to shake his hand," said Sid, tears welling in his eyes, "and I found that it was shaking already."

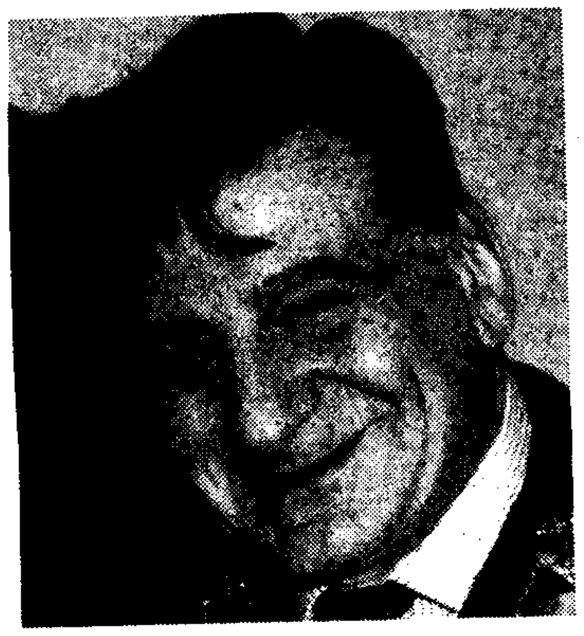
When the Clough gets going

Knee himself gave away nothing of the emotion that he must have felt at what was undoubtedly the end of an era. His, after all, has been a career without parallel in footballing history. But he remained as tight as ever *(shurely 'tight-lipped'? Ed)*.

Knee on Knee

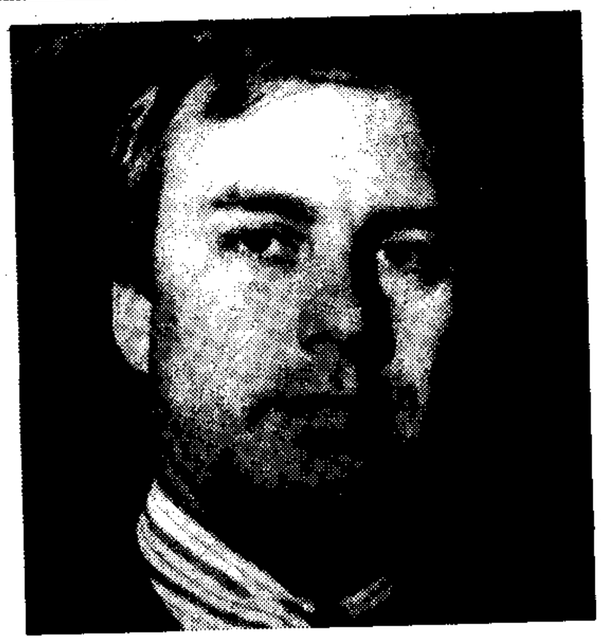
"I never touch a drop. Maybe at Christmas I'll have a sherry or maybe every night I'll have eight pints."

Tributes to 'The Boss'



Publican, Boston Arms, Neasden

"Ron was larger than life. Whether you loved him or you hated him, Ron would never say no to a large scotch."



Bobby Barrie, Manager Dollis Hill (1974-77)

"Ron was a Manager's Manager. We all loved him because he always picked a rotten team against us."

PC Strangelove, Neasden

"It was my privilege to arrest him on a number of occasions. He was a real gentleman and very popular with the lads at the station."

Pele, Brazil

"Que?"

FOCUS ON KNEE

- **May 1967. Knee joins Neasden FC as utility midfielder. Scores own goal on debut.**
- **June 1967. Knee promoted to manager on strength of goal-scoring record (12 o.g.).**
- **1968. The "Knee Babes" bring a new brand of entertaining football to Neasden Bridge. There are large numbers of goals in every game. All of them against Neasden FC.**
- **1969. Neasden [illegible] history book[illegible] double. The only team to lose all games in a season *and* the only team to score no goals in every game.**
- **Knee mooted [illegible] land manager. [illegible] ably passed over.**
- **1975. Knee disciplined for bringing game into disrepute after verbally abusing secretary of the Football Association on Thames TV's *North London Sports Round-Up*. He calls him "a pea-brained git who doesn't know one end of a football from the other".**

Fined a week's wages [illegible].

- **1982. Knee breaks transfer record for North London Relegation League. Buys Osvaldo Häagen-Dazs from AC Lürpak for £10. Has to sell entire squad to cover debts.**
- **1983. Voted Manager of the Year by *Drinks and Drinkmen* magazine.**
- **1987. Following acrimonious dispute with Neasden chairman Brigadier [illegible] the Chairman's mind by burning down his Launderama chain and taking his daughter Roxanne [illegible] for record 100th time.**
- **1993. Neasden face relegation. Knee retires.**

LATE SCORE

Kwik-Save Charity Shield Final

Neasden FC (Camilla, Parker, Bowles)	**3**
Arsenal	**0**

After Extra Time.

SEPARATE LIVES

Silvie Krin

THE STORY SO FAR: Charles is beginning to emerge from his shell and he is visiting Cambridge for an important engagement.

Now read on...

CHARLES strolled pensively down the ancient cobbled streets of his Alma Mater. Ahead loomed the majestic spire of Big Tom and behind it he could just espy the crenellated dome of St Anthony the Blunt, recently restored with the help of the fine classical architect, Sir Crispin Quinlan.

As he rounded the corner and saw once again the breathtaking view of the College of the Queens, memories flooded back to Charles of his own student days.

It had been a carefree young Prince that had then cycled down this very street, his gown billowing in the breeze, his eye caught by the pretty young girls in their mortar boards as they went to buy their books from Simon Heffers or hurried to rehearsals for the Footlings Revue. What had it been called that year? "A Bit of a Larf" — yes that was it. He had done his sketch with the turnip and put on his Spike Milligan voice.

How things had changed! Now he was back in Cambridge for a much more serious performance. The annual Merchant Ivory Lecture in the Mausoleum, on the subject "The Future of the Planet".

"We're all very much looking forward to this evening, Sire," said Sir Anthony Magdalen-Smith, the Master of St Birtrams (Birts), walking attentively at his side. It was he who had invited Charles to deliver the inaugural lecture before what he promised would be an audience of over a hundred senior academics.

"And of course we've got the media there, Sire. There's a huge amount of interest."

"Oh really?" Charles brightened. After the triviality of so much of the recent coverage of his activities, here at last was some indication that the importance of what he had to say was being appreciated by the press.

The two men passed over the famous Archer's Bridge with its grinning medieval gargoyles. Below them happy couples in punts threw condoms into the gently rippling waters of the River Scam.

"I was thinking of beginning with a sort of overall view of the whole population thing and then sort of moving on to pollution issues and the environment."

Sir Andrew nodded repeatedly. "First rate. Absolutely wonderful."

Charles continued: "Then I thought I'd go deeper and get into the whole spiritual dimension, the need for harmony in smaller units, the home, the family..."

Sir Anthony coughed disparagingly. "Are you quite sure about that bit, Sire? I'm just thinking about the time factor."

Charles seemed oblivious to his host's concern. "Have you read that book by my old friend Sir Laurens van der Post, *Travels with my Aunt in the Sahara*?"

Sir Anthony nodded again. "Indeed I have, sir."

"Then you'll remember the bit where they met the tribe who live in tree-huts and the chief says to Sir Laurens, 'There's no place like home'? I think that's very true, don't you?"

There was a loud splash and when Charles turned round he found his distinguished companion had been so intent on his words of wisdom that he had fallen off the bridge and landed up to his neck in the river.

As Sir Anthony was hauled into a punt by laughing students, he shouted: "Very true indeed, Sire, when you think about it!"

"AND so, ladies and gentlemen, let me say in conclusion that if the planet is to survive all these changes then we, its inhabitants, must also change ourselves. If we do not, the prospect really is..." He paused dramatically. "Appalling. Thank you."

A roar of deafening applause erupted from Sir Anthony Magdalen-Smith, who a second later was enthusiastically joined by his academic colleagues.

There were not as many attending the lecture as Charles had hoped but they did seem very keen. The photographers' bulbs flashed and the cameras whirred and Charles felt a warm glow of satisfaction engulf him. There could be no doubt about it. It had been a great success and at last the vulgar inconsequentialities of certain other royal persons would be eclipsed. No more stories about getting wet in theme parks, this was the real thingie.

"And I feel sure," Sir Anthony was saying, "that our Royal Visitor will be only too happy to answer any questions that you may have. Yes, the gentlemen with the stubble and the dark glasses?"

The questioner rose unsteadily to his feet. "Dick Littlejohn, *The Sun*. Do you have any comment on your wife's courageous admission of having bulimia due to your cruelty towards her?"

Another man in a leather jacket jumped to his feet. "Sid Fester, *Daily Mail*. You've got to hand it to her, haven't you, sir? Did you like the bit about broken families causing all the problems?"

"Isn't she wonderful?" cried another voice.

Charles stammered forlornly, "I don't see, er, how the future of the earth, the Gaia, is actually affected by, er... I think... er..."

"That's all the questions we've got time for," Sir Anthony hurriedly intervened. "Thank you all very much."

In the deepening gloom of the misty Cambridge night, the great bell of St Diana-the-Martyr tolled its melancholy knell.

(To be continued)

'YES IT'S OVER!' says the Treasury

by our Economics Staff **P.S.B.R. Disaster** and **E.R.M. Failure**

AT LAST experts have confirmed that the long-awaited recovery is officially over.

"There is no doubt about it," said Norman Lamont. "Britain's longest recovery has finally come to an end. And now all the conditions are right for a full-blooded recession."

Mr Lamont continued as he opened a bottle of champagne (Thresher, £7.99, prop. J. Onanuga): "All the indicators show that the nightmare is just beginning. I am in place. So is John Major and so is Michael Portillo."

As Mr Lamont lit a celebratory cheap cigarette he hit back at his critics: "Confidence in me is at an all-time low. After surviving a pretty grim five minutes of recovery caused by factors beyond our control, this government can get back to doing what it is here for — leading Britain back to depression."

BOSNIA LATEST

GENERALS SAY NO TO WAR

by Our Defence Editor
Brig. Harry Trumper-Smythe

■ NATO's top generals hit out yesterday at what they called "the ludicrous idea" that they should be asked to fight in Bosnia.

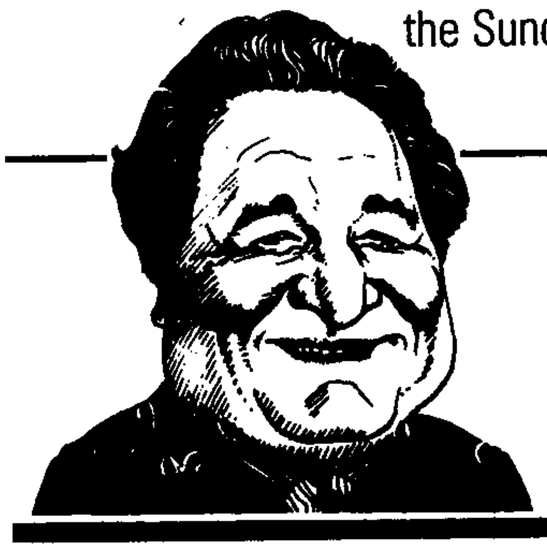
"What these people don't realise," said General Sir John Weasel, "is that war is a jolly dangerous business. You can get shot at, you know. People might even be killed."

His views were echoed by US General Colin Hackenbush III. "What do these politicians think they're playing at," he thundered. "I didn't join the army to go into battle. That sort of thing was all very well in the past, but it's quite out of place for the modern soldier."

Brig. Trumper-Smythe comments:

The view put over by NATO's top strategists yesterday accords with the latest doctrines of NCW or non-combatant warfare, as I outlined in my recent book *Hands Up, We Surrender*. The role of the soldier in the post-Cold War period is to act as an observer while various foreigners massacre each other. The old-fashioned notion of using a highly trained and expensively equipped force to take part in an armed conflict is now generally viewed as a wasteful and inappropriate use of resources.

And now — the World's Worst Columnist joins the Sunday Times!



PETER McLIE'S WEAK

Is Maggie on the way out?

My political informants tell me that the knives are out for Mrs Thatcher.

A number of influential Tories are now saying: "Maggie has gone too far."

If I was a betting man, I would not put too many bawbees on the Iron Lady surviving as Prime Minister beyond Easter.

Funny old world, isn't it?

Diana and Charles to wed?

I notice that Princess Diana and Prince Charles are getting on like a house on fire these days!

My spies tell me they were seen together on TV the other night, attending some grand function.

And they were clearly enjoying the occasion hugely!

Wouldn't it be fine and dandy if these two young lovebirds were to name the day?

Latest rubbish on the telly

Have you caught up yet with ITV's latest bid to compete with the Beeb's highly successful police series, *Eldorado*?

It is set in a Northern town and everyone speaks in comical northern accents.

They've called it *Coronation Street*.

Mark my words. This Lancashire hotch-potch will never get very far in the ratings.

Back to the drawing board, Sir David Frost!

What is going on?

● Have you noticed the funny little green things which have started appearing on all our trees?

I have counted at least 20 of them in the past week.

What are they advertising, I wonder?

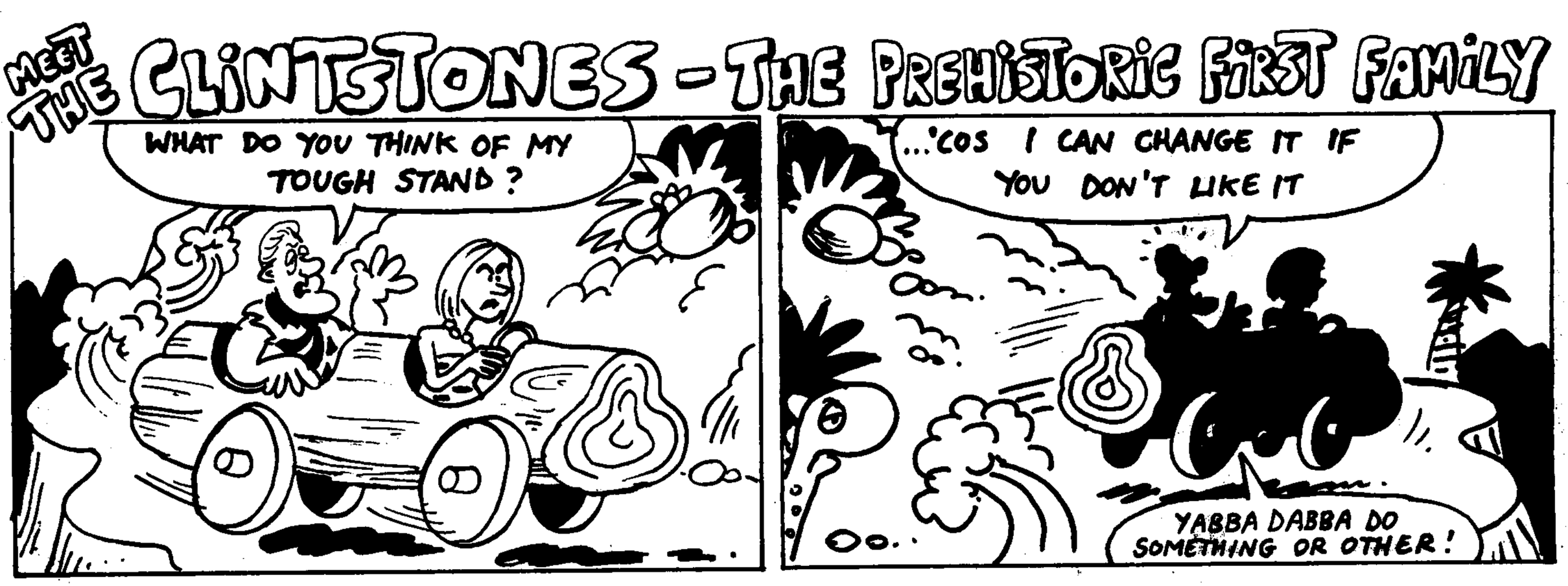
Or is the explanation more sinister than that?

I notice that the Government has been distinctly quiet on this one.

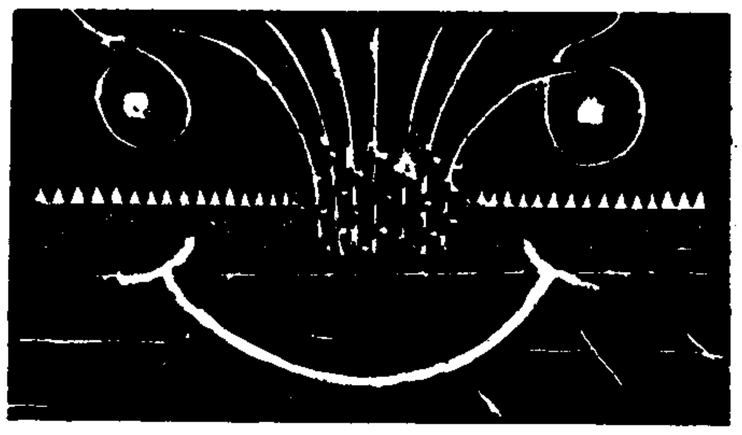
Why are we not being told? And if not, why not?

Isn't life £100 grand a year?

(Great stuff. Keep it up. A. Neill.)


MEET THE CLINTSTONES - THE PREHISTORIC FIRST FAMILY
WHAT DO YOU THINK OF MY TOUGH STAND?
...'COS I CAN CHANGE IT IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT
YABBA DABBA DO SOMETHING OR OTHER!

DIARY



JILLY COOPER

Men!! But, having said that, I can't help but feel just a mite boo-hoo-ish about poor old Radovan Karadzic. He must be hurting terribly. He looks such a sweetie but so utterly lost, poor love, with that simply *blissful* head of hair blowing this way and that across his poor old furrowed brow as if not quite knowing which way to turn. I know how he feels, because I went through the same sort of thing when Leo ran off with someone else, and deeply gloomy I was too, but that's meant to be jolly private and I literally never mention it, not even now. There I go again!

There's such a lot of unhappiness around at the moment, what with the recession and poor Fergie and Bosnia and that awful spell of rain we had last week and the beastly IRA and our lovely dog Josie having to go to our darling vet for fleas. This means that on top of everything else I simply can't bear to see Radovan looking so very, very miz.

" 'Serbs' him jolly well right!" (!) some will say, but I can't help feeling the big softie could do with a bit of a cuddle, a jolly good night's sleep and a rattling yarn, so let's hope the Red Cross reach Raddie with a copy of my latest book before those tears start plopping on his pillow, poor love.

Rushed off my feet with this book, I've already got going on my next, which is going to be completely different and awfully artistic, set in lovely snowy Norway at the turn of the century, with lots of friendly huskies and really smashing reindeer and super cuddly polar bears.

The plot is going to be very, very Norwegian — "Nor-way" to treat a lady, you might say! — with our hero, Sven Lloyd-Johnson, impossibly handsome, chasing after all the married women in the little Norwegian community of Cosytown-on-Fjord, but eventually falling absolutely madly in love with the lovely heroine, Brigitte, or Brigie for short, who's always a bit of a mess and can't stop bursting into absolute fits of giggles at all the wrong moments but has an insatiable passion for mongrels and a pet moose called "Moose at Ten" (!) and is blessed with an utterly blissful heart of gold.

Of course, there's simply oodles of the most super sex in the book, very passionate and deliciously steamy and very, very Norwegian. In this opening passage, Sven has it off with Hedda, or Heddie, on the tundra he has just had laid — at the most frightful expense — outside his £2,000,000 mansion. Quite a turn-on — or "tundra-on" (!) — I think you'll agree!:

"Sven was like the most amazingly bouncy energetic dog when it came to sex. He insisted on eating minced morsels out of a bowl on the floor before leaping onto his latest love.

"When he leapt at last, Heddie, super, adorable, kind-hearted Heddie, who looked rather like the lovely, brilliant Anne Diamond when she became a TV superstar in Britain a full eight years later, lovely Heddie was waiting for him like an obedient Spaniel, her ears flapping over the sides of the pillows.

"There followed three hours of deliriously passionate love-making, absolutely super and hardly messy at all. For Heddie, it was like nothing she had ever imagined before: like winning all the rosettes at the very best gymkhana and seeing the most fabulous film and being awfully naughty and stealing some chocolate mousse from the fridge and having a jolly good giggle — and all at the same time! It was super to be a sexy girl in Norway at the turn of the century, she thought.

"When it was all over, Sven picked up his 19th century Norwegian mobile phone and forcefully tapped out a number with his wildly masculine forefinger. 'Hello!' he barked, setting the scene, 'This is ruthless but irresistible Sven calling from Norway. The time is 1901, just one year into the new century.'

"Suddenly, Sven felt the utterly overwhelming urge to make a Norwegian pun. 'Let me inform you that there hasn't been much sunshine here. Also, thank goodness I'm not a soldier outside Buckingham Palace,' he said, a smile lighting up his heart-stoppingly fanciable face, 'or otherwise it wouldn't be so much "the turn of the century" as "the tan of the sentry"!!!' From the other end came simply gales of merriment. No-one in Norway had ever made a joke before, and this was simply the best ever."

I'm sorry, but I really and absolutely don't, don't, DON'T want to say anything about that awful business a couple of years ago when lovely, kind Leo had his little thingy with that poor sweet love of a woman — let's not name her for her own good — who must be hurting dreadfully, poor thing. It was just one of those simply dreadful damp-hankie-ish sobby sorts of things, and I have vowed not to talk about it in public, but to let bygones be bygones, and it would be just so frightfully unfair on her, poor poppet, to rake over it all again in print, going on about all the ghastly unhappiness she caused, poor love, and all the simply horrid hurt she brought onto us all by being so very, very public about it, poor lamb, so I'd like to make it quite clear that in my new book the character of Grizelda Garst-Leigh, the hideous, fat-thighed, semi-alcoholic, fifteen-times-married utter tart, poor love, and the character of the internationally successful overweight publisher Leo Olde-Lecher, married to lovely, bubbly, tremendously sexy yet discreet and utterly loyal media superstar Gillie, are all entirely fictitious, and have nothing to do with the true-life characters they're completely based on, poor loves.

Today I felt like strolling out into the country so I went for a lovely long country walk in the tremendously jolly countryside around our country house which is right bang in the middle of the country, completely surrounded on all sides by country, and I was walking towards a country wood — best foot "for-wood"!! - I thought, "Golly, how lucky I am to live here, right in the middle of the countryside, full of country air and country people and country-ish things to do". But then I thought, "But golly, I love London too, with all my chums and jaunts and giggles and flirts and shops and devastatingly good-looking men and cars and buses and Londony things!" In an ideal world, I thought, London would be in the very centre of the countryside, and the countryside would be in the very centre of London, so then everyone would be happy and we wouldn't have this ghastly recession any more and Fergie would cheer up and Raddie would smile and everyone would begin to realise that Norman Lamont is a lovely, lovely man and a smashing host and they'd stop going at him in that beastly way. Poor love, he's hurting dreadfully. Hey-ho! Time for a drinkie with the lovely kind Leo, poor silly poppet! Men!!

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'Ariel', BBC staff magazine

Warm hands
Also new in the Chester Care catalogue are gel **HAND WARMER MITTS** from Wako, Texas.
Arthritis Care newsletter

Lloyd — a senior executive with Carlton Greeting Cards — was posted to England
Yorkshire Evening Post

JERUSALEM — Ezer Weizman, a former general turned dove, was elected Wednesday as Israel's seventh president
Daily Journal, Venezuela

BINOCULARS 16x50 field 3.s sirius coated lens with case, hardly used after 6 o'clock, £15.—
Sevenoaks Chronicle

Literary Review

Out of the back passage

Tess
Emma Tennant
(HarperCollins, £14.99)

WHAT IS the averagely competent novelist to do in an age where the intelligent reading public has largely given up on contemporary fiction and the trains are full of commuters avidly rediscovering the joys of *War and Peace* and *Vanity Fair*?

One obvious response to the tribes of people who lament that "they don't write novels like *x* anymore" is to compose sequels to all those evergreen classics — to *Gone With The Wind*, for example (done), *Rebecca* (about to be done by Susan Hill, reputedly for a million quid) and *Wuthering Heights* (two versions, apparently). The list is endless and most of the novelist's traditional brow-furrowers (who? where? how?) are happily cancelled out by the presence of a cast, a milieu and the beginnings of a plot.

Easy, isn't it? A slightly flashier stratagem is to write *variations* on great works of modern literature. This tendency has been in evidence for some time now, has intellectual respectability (borrowings from dead authors can be marked down as "intertextuality") and the inestimable advantage of being ideologically OK. Any feminist tinkerings with luminous Victorians, for instance, can be justified on the grounds that the original is incorrigibly phallocentric and the writer is storming the citadels of a white, male literary establishment. Again, the list of potential rewrites is endless, and no doubt Martina Chuzzlewit and Edwina Drood are even now preparing to spring, untrammelled, from the autumn catalogues.

A glance at her back catalogue reveals that Emma Tennant has been mining this particular lode for some time (*The Adventures of Robina*, *Faustine*). Her update of *Tess of the d'Urbervilles*, consequently, conforms to a rather predictable pattern: set in the Dorset of the 50s and 60s, told by Liza-Lu, Tess's sister who currently has charge of the latter's baby granddaughter, with Alec as the local ton-up kid and Angel Clare a hippy rock musician. An agreeable twist sees Tess murdering her father (with mother's help) for abusing her child.

All in all, a thoroughly modern piece of buggering about with great literature. However, that's not the half of it, for Ms Tennant plainly has a much sturdier quarry in view. This is to establish *Tess* as merely another stopping point on the great, high feminist trajectory. Geology, it was, that began the "myth of male superiority" — all the fault of protozoic atoms, apparently — after which we are washed away by a tidal wave of barmy, trans-cultural didacticism which brings together Great Goddesses, Indo-European Sky Fathers, Frigg, Balder, Penelope, Odysseus and St Augustine, all of them working through time to suppress women's sense of themselves.

Everything is connected, of course, and even the superior household appliances of the modern age are spiritual manacles: "Just as much as all the nameless women and eyeless, vastly burgeoning fuck-goddesses of extreme antiquity; we were, despite all the machines, sacrifices on the altar of fertility."

As a fairy-tale, Laura Ashley feminist, Emma Tennant is in a class of her own. The late Angela Carter was not more whimsical; Fay Weldon is not more cosily hectoring. Ms Tennant specialises, of course, in loopy mythological projections ("But the boys will inherit the sceptre of the kings"), in a high, tale-telling style laid low by jargon (" ...like the earth before the balance was thrown away by the rise of the phallocentric culture, the stories we told were equally about the bravery, and the hardships, and the love and growing up of female and male children alike") and, above all, in hilarious, self-conscious lectures. I mean, how do you write a sentence such as "Even then, in the days of the druids, the end of the matrilineal age was in sight" or "Now we must find the strength to convert — if necessary, to kill — the enemy of the natural balance of the Earth before it is too late" without bursting into laughter?

Allan Massie has been wheeled out on the jacket to suggest that Ms Tennant "writes with wit, fully in control of her material and technique". This is odd as the material in *Tess* sprawls all over the place, and the technique is simply a wide-eyed, jam it all in and squat on the lid inclusiveness. Even stranger is this overpowering wish to sit precariously athwart other (and better) writers' juggernauts.

Emma Tennant isn't a bad writer, not by any means, but the main effect of this piece of tweaking on the feminist literary thread is to send the reader back to Hardy, cursing all the while at these pale, prejudicial, modern imitations which, inevitably, are scant substitutes for the real thing.

Books & Bookmen

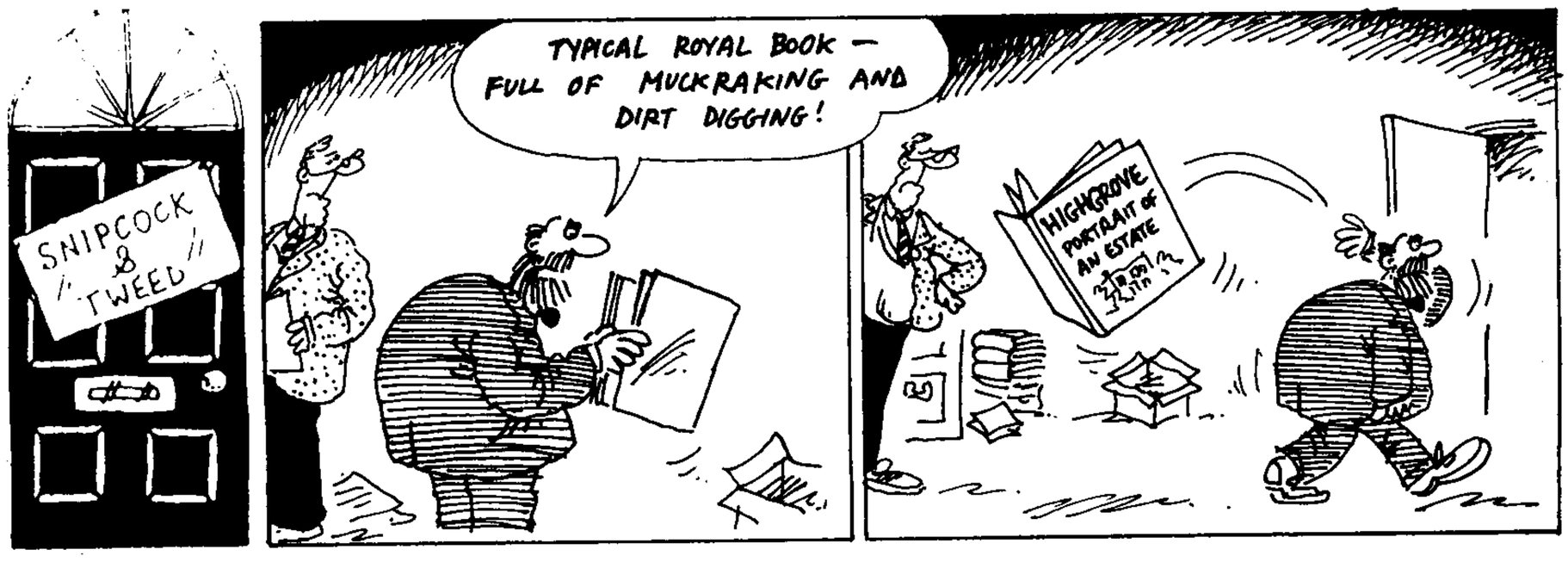
☐ D.H. LAWRENCE died in 1930, and thus under copyright law his published work should have been in the public domain since 1980. But that would be to ignore the wiles of brocade waist-coated Gerald Pollinger, literary agent to the estate.

Some years back Gerald permitted Cambridge University Press to bring out no fewer than three different early versions of *Lady Chatterley's Lover*. Many of Lawrence's books were first published by Martin Secker and by Heinemann, both now imprints of Reed Consumer Books. Reed is notorious for clawing back paperback rights in "its" authors' books from publishers to whom years before reprint rights were sub-licensed, and then to bring out new editions on its own paperback list, Mandarin, reaping significant profits.

Penguin has for some years been experiencing palpitations at the prospect of losing its profitable raft of Lawrence titles. But, to the frustration of Reed, Pollinger has performed a witty conjuring trick. He has arranged that Penguin, in return for a mighty six-figure advance, will henceforth publish in paperback the CUP copyright editions of DHL, bringing the *oeuvre* out in 40 volumes, including no doubt all those dreary versions of smutty *Lady C*, and Pollinger and the estate will continue to wax fat on the royalties.

■ TWO MORE refusals, along with Iain Banks, to the Best of Young British Novelists launch party at the Saatchi Gallery from among the highly talented twenty. Tibor Fischer was abroad. Jeanette Winterson had, presumably, a better party to go to.

'Bookworm'



RAILWAYS

Slow train coming — or not

WHILE France, Spain and other European countries invest to speed up their passenger trains, Britain has other ideas — making our trains slower.

The best example is the West Coast main line from Euston to Liverpool, Manchester and Glasgow. Because the government has refused to authorise an upgrading of the line — including faster new trains — Britain's principal trunk rail route is having to make do with life-expired 1960s infrastructure.

Express trains have to slow down in several places — especially south of Rugby — for safety reasons, and they are likely to be ordered to run slower throughout as managers become increasingly concerned about the state of the track (faster trains cause more damage to track, which BR now can't afford to maintain properly). Example: This summer, the flagship Birmingham to Euston Pullman train takes nine minutes longer than it did two years ago.

A similar effect will soon be seen on dozens of Regional Railways lines, as part of the "maintenance holiday" described in *Eye* 817. Following this year's 22 per cent cut in government grant to Regional Railways, engineers on rural lines are being ordered to make repairs only to things which have already broken, not to things which look as if they are about to break. One theory is that demoralised BR managers are pursuing a "scorched earth" policy: Railtrack is going to grab the track infrastructure soon, so why give oneself a hernia to hand it to Railtrack in pristine condition?

Another uniquely British phenomenon which has emerged in the past year is the adding of "Charter minutes" to passenger train journeys.

Under John Major's pitiful passenger's charter, BR has to shell out compensation to passengers on trains which reach their destinations more than a few minutes late. BR responded positively to this... by giving trains a little longer to reach their destination and publicising arrival times which are later than those on the timetable followed by the drivers!

This means trains a few minutes late at their destination do *not* now quality for compensation under the charter, so saving BR lots of dosh while generally making train journeys slower. Example: peak period trains between Guildford and Waterloo are now being allowed five minutes more than they were last spring, so trains that would have been a few minutes late last spring now don't incur penalty payments under the charter.

All this, of course, is happening in a country which doesn't bat an eyelid at spending hundreds of millions of pounds on new road schemes merely to shave two or three minutes off car journey times.

NUCLEAR ACCIDENTS

France's *bombe surprise*

AS THE Russian authorities and western nuclear agencies vainly try to determine the extent of radioactive contamination from last month's accident at the Tomsk-7 reprocessing plant in Siberia, a vital question has gone unasked.

Why was a Russian facility set up to produce enriched uranium and plutonium for exclusively military purposes still operating in 1993?

Not only is the cold war supposed to be over, but Russia already has a glut of weapons-grade material — an estimated 100 tonnes of plutonium — which is likely to double once it begins dismantling warheads in accordance with the START agreement.

Part of the astonishing answer appears to be that Tomsk-7 was reprocessing fuel for the French nuclear industry.

Documents unearthed in Russia show irrefutably that the Siberian plant had a contract to reprocess 300-400 tonnes of irradiated fuel for Cogema, France's equivalent of British Nuclear Fuels. The contract also required the Russians to enrich uranium for use in French reactors.

Why Cogema should contract out reprocessing to a plant that is known to fall far short of western safety standards rather than reprocess it at its own facility in La Hague is a mystery. John Large, an independent nuclear consultant, said the fuel concerned might have come from the French military programme and either be "offspec" or "too dirty" for La Hague.

It may turn out to be a case of a western power cynically dumping its soiled nuclear laundry on the Russians, who are too cash-strapped to turn down the offer although they know they should not be operating plants like Tomsk-7 on safety (or any other) grounds.

But, even more astonishingly, a well-placed source in the Russian nuclear establishment suggests that the Tomsk-Cogema agreement dates back to the mid-1970s.

If this is true, the implications are astounding: France would have been providing the Soviet Union with the feedstock to make weapons with which to threaten the destruction of western civilisation. Did it secure itself immunity from any Soviet strike in exchange? Perhaps that is why France stayed out of Nato.

With any luck the commission appointed by the Russian parliament to investigate the Tomsk incident — on which Mr Large is likely to be the west's representative — will delve into the matter when it visits the site later this month.

MENTAL HEALTH

Careless in the community

NOTTINGHAM'S infamous Musters Hotel is at the centre of growing concern over the way the town cares for its homeless and helpless — but it has taken two deaths to put it there.

The sleazy 120-room hotel hit the headlines in August 1991 when its staff put two alcoholics, Matthew Morgan and Jeremy Pankhurst, both known for their violence, into the same tiny room and left them. Morgan killed Pankhurst and is now in jail. Then, last November, the Musters was back in the news when the mummified body of another resident, 20-year-old Linda Killeen, was found in the cellar. She had been there three years.

How Killeen died remains a mystery. What is less of a mystery is the huge profit being made by the Musters' mother and son owners, Iris and Rex Harvey. Company accounts show that last year they creamed off £57,800 in directors' remuneration and another £150,000 in dividends, paid through two bank accounts in Jersey.

Much of that cash came directly from the department of social security (DSS). The hotel's staff are detailed to open all mail thought to contain money, especially giro cheques, and to pay them into the hotel's account. The Harveys make the "appropriate deductions" and pay the remainder to the hapless residents.

Thanks to the government's much vaunted "care in the community" initiative, the hotel's main clients are alcoholics, the mentally ill or otherwise desperate. Few are in a position to risk complaining — but some try to make up the lost cash by openly selling drugs on the pavement outside the hotel, much to locals' annoyance. The Musters has already catered specially for the most vulnerable and addicted among its customers — by opening a bar.

"Locals" include home secretary Kenneth Clarke, whose home is nearby and whose constituency includes the Musters. Clarke holds frequent surgeries in the Rushcliffe Conservative club just yards from the Musters. Also very local is Nottingham county hall — including the social services department that is supposed to watch places like the Musters. The department does periodically send inspectors round, but for some reason it is always just after the disappearance of wooden partitions that create lots of extra rooms. These seem to reappear when the inspectors have left. Most odd.

If the Musters seems to show insufficient concern over the death of its residents it is hardly surprising. The free market health policies of its very own local MP give them the lead.

LIBEL

Allason Wonderland

THE *Contemporary Review*, a small monthly literary magazine with a circulation of no more than 2,000 is facing the first serious threat to its existence since it was founded 126 years ago.

It comes in the form of a libel action from Rupert Allason, the dashing Tory MP for Torbay who, under his pseudonym Nigel West, pours out endless pot-boilers on intelligence matters.

The *Contemporary Review* sent Allason's latest effusion, *Secret War, the Story of SOE*, to Ann Bonsor, who had worked in a minor capacity for SOE during the war and who, incidentally, is a cousin of Allason's Tory colleague Sir Nicholas Bonsor.

Ann Bonsor was angry with the book and denounced it variously as "shoddy... offensive and negative... misinformed... spurious". She provided plenty of evidence for her attack, but that did not stop Allason from firing off an angry letter of protest. With one small omission (itself libellous of Bonsor), the letter was printed in the January issue of the *Review*, without critical comment. Nevertheless, Allason fired off a writ demanding libel damages which he must know the *Review* cannot possibly afford.

What prompted Allason's fantastic action? Most probably he was puffed up by his recent libel success against the *Mirror* for their splenetic reaction to his denunciation of Robert Maxwell. That brought him in a reported £250,000 tax free, without him even having to go to court. But he may find the action against the *Review* rather tougher work: the action will be defended, the magazine pleading justification and fair comment. It may also highlight Mr Allason's own economy with the truth on several occasions in the past.

One rather relevant instance was his blurting out on radio that a book on Colin Wallace was "riddled with errors". When the MP could not produce a single error, he publicly apologised. Not much later, in a meeting at the House of Commons, he denounced in advance a programme on Thames Television about MI5 on the grounds that one MI5 agent named in the programme was dead. Oh, dear. When the programme appeared, there was the agent being interviewed outside his home, large as life.

CONSTRUCTION

The fall Guy's

AN EPIDEMIC of bankruptcies is sweeping Guy's hospital in London as contractors involved in its £133 million redevelopment find their dream of making a fast buck from the NHS fading faster than NHS health care.

The hospital's new-look business managers had planned to spend the cash on new wards, day centres and other facilities. But in reality they look set for indefinite problems as their contractors argue over money. Main contractor Higgs & Hill faces huge claims for cost over-runs from its sub-contractors, and is using its financial muscle to fight them all the way.

H&H's engineering sub-contractor, the Irish-owned M.F. Kent, started work on a contract valued at £22.3 million but claims it has cost £36 million so far and the final cost will be £47 million. M.F. Kent is big enough to cope, but four smaller companies, some sub-sub-contractors, have already failed. They are Airways (Ductwork Contractors) from Birmingham; Pipework Systems and Parsa Doric electrical contractors, both from the South; and WES, a Luton paintwork firm.

The scrimping and saving ordered by top execs in all companies guarantees that Guy's will have one of the shoddiest new annexes in the UK to add to its already shoddy other buildings.

POLICE 5

A thirst for justice

IT'S A FAIR cop, guv is rarely heard in Birmingham, home of the infamous West Midlands police, but it would have been justified in one recent arrest — that of retired Superintendent Martin Burton for being over the limit as he drove home from the pub.

Burton used to run the force's press office — known as the ministry of truth to Birmingham hacks — until he fell out of favour, took retirement and extracted his revenge by talking to the local media.

In fact he talked to BBC Radio WM talkshow host Ed Doolan, who writes a regular column in the Birmingham *Evening Mail*. Burton's comment lambasting his former employers duly appeared alongside a grinning mugshot of Doolan in a column wryly titled "The Voice of Sanity".

The result was amazingly quick. Most of Burton's ex-colleagues knew his drinking holes and had turned a blind eye when he and others over-did it. Now they waited for him — and within two weeks he was nicked. The arresting officers even knew his name and former rank.

Coincidence perhaps — but two days later Doolan found himself pulled over after a social function. Wisely, he had drunk nothing.

The incidents are remarkably similar to that experienced by Birmingham solicitor John Morgan (see *Eyes passim*) who has made a good living saving the skins of many of those framed by the notorious senior crimes squad — who hated him accordingly. He left his city centre Hotspot Club one night followed by so many police that he arrived home with eight cars following. The plods had got it wrong again: he was being driven by a friend.

Meanwhile the force is in turmoil over revelations that officers stole money and possessions taken in for safekeeping. One detective even "borrowed" a tumble dryer confiscated from the home of a suspect who was wrongly accused of stealing it. It was returned to him badly abused and covered in dents. The officer is now suspended.

Chief constable "Biffo" Hadfield is furious over the leaks and has demanded better work from the press corps. That hope may be a little forlorn. A sizzling affair between a senior press officer and her lover, one of Biffo's closest colleagues, has drawn to a stormy close with her being thrown out of his home. The PR could be pretty strained for some time yet.

MARINE SALVAGE

Oiling the wheels of commerce

CRESCENT Petroleum, the Sharjah-based oil company whose lawyers are doing very nicely countering an alleged "smear campaign" by the international press, has a problem closer to home which even Crescent cannot blame on journalists.

Christoph Bettermann, the company's president and a former deputy chairman of Harrods, is on trial in Dubai for alleged fraud relating to salvage payments made after an Iranian gunboat attack against an oilfield during the Iran-Iraq war. Mr Bettermann strongly denies any wrongdoing.

At the time of the attack, in 1988, Mr Bettermann, a German national, was the managing director of Dubai-based International Marine Services (IMS), a salvage company owned by Harrods' proprietor, Muhammad Fayed.

Subsequently, for five months spanning 1990-91, Mr Bettermann became deputy chairman of Harrods. While he was in London, IMS discovered the alleged irregularities which led first to his being fired and then to the fraud charges. He later became president and chief executive of Crescent.

The saga goes back to a night in April 1988 when Iranian gunboats attacked the Mubarak oilfield off the emirate of Sharjah, which is operated by Crescent Petroleum. A permanently moored oil storage vessel, the 112,744 tonne York Marine, was set ablaze. Crescent at once requested help from IMS, which responded jointly with the Dubai branch of Dutch salvage giant Smit Tak. The fires were extinguished and the York Marine was towed into port for repairs.

At the time the ship was owned by Britain's Bibby Bulk Carriers Ltd, which had chartered it to a Saudi Arabian firm, Petroship Partners. In turn, the latter had leased it to Crescent for one year, starting 21 January 1988, at $9,900 per day.

The standard practice is for salvage companies' fees to be paid by the insurers of the ship and of the cargo. In the case of the York Marine, the vessel itself was insured against war risks with Lloyd's and in early 1989 a $1.365 million payment was agreed to meet the salvage and repair costs relating to the ship.

The vessel's cargo of crude oil, however, was uninsured. The salvage payment for this was the responsibility of its owner, Crescent Petroleum, with which IMS and Smit Tak negotiated a financial settlement directly. It was agreed that Crescent should pay $1.8 million to the salvage firms.

According to statements made by Bettermann, the $1.8 million was paid to IMS on 12 January 1989, from a Crescent account with the Sharjah-based Investment Bank for Trade and Finance. Mr Bettermann has also claimed, however, that a payment of $900,000 was simultaneously made *by* IMS to Cornish Investments SA, a Panamanian firm linked to Crescent and its owner, Iraqi-born Hamid Jafar. This payment was made by a bankers' draft dated 10 January 1989.

According to Mr Bettermann, the $1.8 million cheque was exchanged for the $900,000 bankers' draft by Hosam Raouf, Crescent's Iraqi-born deputy chairman who lives in the North Welsh coastal town of Portmadoc.

The purpose of the $900,000 payment to Panama remains a mystery. Hamid Jafar has declined to comment. So has Mr Bettermann.

Hamid Jafar's brother, Jafar Jafar, headed Iraq's atom bomb programme, and until the invasion of Kuwait Crescent had a close business relationship with Saddam's regime. It is not known whether this contributed to the Iranian decision to attack Crescent's oilfield.

MAN IN THE EYE

Basking with the Dolphins

WHILE the Tory rank and file takes a tough line on foreigners and immigration, the party's leading lights have no qualms about dealing with johnny foreigner — so long as johnny has lots of money.

While it was revealed last week how the Conservatives' election chest received £7 million from foreign backers — people who didn't even have a vote in Britain — this week the *Eye* can report on the interesting foreign business contacts of one of the architects of Thatcherism, Cecil Parkinson.

When John Major became prime minister, Cecil gave up any hope of ever holding that office himself and devoted himself to becoming seriously rich. Having stood down, he resumed his company directorships, the shares of which were held by his children. When he moved to the Lords he didn't have to declare his interests.

One of Cecil's directorships you will not read about at Companies House is that of Dolphin Holdings Ltd — for the good reason that it is registered in Bermuda. Last year Parky became chairman of the group, which is a vehicle for the multifarious interests of lively Kenyan businessman, Ketan Somaia.

The most famous of his interests is BCCI: in 1991, Somaia bought remnants of the collapsed bank, notably in Kenya and Mauritius, renaming them Delphis Bank Ltd. It may sound odd, but that makes Parkinson, effectively, head of what remains of BCCI.

Dolphin is worth an estimated $120 million, and until the end of last year was based in Britain — not that one can garner much help from the information it files here. The accounts of the shell company, Dolphin Holdings (International) Ltd, are an essay in secrecy: 80 per cent of the issued shares are held by Isle of Man or Guernsey companies. And a couple of years ago proceedings were started to strike the company off for not filing accounts. The threat was later withdrawn. Only the barest accounts are filed, in line with legislation for "small" companies — legislation introduced by Parkinson when he was in government!

Last year the group moved its main dealings to Dubai, where, according to the newsletter *Africa Analysis*, Parkinson has been seen on TV sporting himself at the races.

Dolphin still has some UK interests. One of Somaia's men, Amit Radia, is also a director of Splashdown Milton Keynes Ltd, a leisure complex in the town, which Dolphin manages. And according to a story in *Estates Times* in January, Dolphin bought a five-storey building off Grosvenor Square, intending to occupy it. The building still stands empty, and the London company continues to operate from small offices in Edgware. Apparently there are now no plans to move to Mayfair after all.

So who is Parky's chum, Ketan Somaia? Although he is now extremely rich, he grew up in poverty. During a judicial inquiry in 1991 into the murder of a former Kenyan minister, Robert Ouko, allegations of corruption were made against him, which he denied.

Certainly his close friendship with Kenyan president Daniel arap Moi has not hindered his rise. When Somaia could not persuade the owner of the International Casino in Nairobi to sell the business to him, Moi decreed that gambling could only be done with foreign currency. As Kenyans needed a licence to hold foreign exchange, the casino rapidly found itself going bankrupt. In desperation, the owner sold to Somaia. The absurd currency law was then scrapped.

Another Kenyan businessman, Samuel Machuria, has alleged that his plans to operate a paper plant were thwarted by the government in preference to a competitor. The government put the company into liquidation for an alleged debt. According to Machuria, Somaia then approached him and told him the only way he was going to get his assets back was to sell the company to him for 250 million Kenyan shillings — even though the International Finance Corporation valued it at three times that. Machuria sold.

Somaia tends to cause a stir wherever he goes: when he bought up the Mauritian holdings of BCCI, the finance minister there announced he was "scrutinising the activities" of Delphis.

It would be interesting to know *how* Lord Parky become involved with Somaia. Mark Thatcher?

NEXT WEEK — The return of FOOTNOTES

In the City

EVENTS BEHIND the scenes at the Polly Peck trial grow curiouser and curiouser as the investigation by Scotland Yard continues into the remarkable allegation of an attempt to influence the outcome of the trial by bribing the judge.

So far, not surprisingly, the Yard's Serious Crimes Squad has found not the slightest evidence to suggest that such an attempt has been made. But it has discovered evidence of cash payments made by certain interested parties outside the country consistent with an agreement suggesting that money would be paid in the event of a successful outcome. It was the discovery of such an agreement, indicating a possible payment of £3.5 million, last Autumn which sparked the investigation.

Quite properly the police have found no reason to request an interview with the trial judge, Mr Justice Tucker, as there is nothing to suggest his knowledge or involvement.

Informed sources suggest that far from a real attempt to influence the course of the trial, what is under investigation is in reality a scam on those who would wish it to be influenced and have paid upfront money in return for something which it was never intended could or would be delivered.

Meanwhile, for now at least, legal discussion about whether Mr Justice Tucker should continue as the trial judge is in abeyance. Despite the objections of the defence and the intervention (on a general legal point which indirectly supported the defence) of the Director of Public Prosecutions — the Serious Fraud Office has taken no position on this issue — the trial goes on with Tucker in charge. The judge's view, quite correctly, is that there is no reason why he should step down. Such a decision would be certain to result in a substantial delay to the trial, probably pushing it back well into next year.

An attempt last month to seek a ruling on that decision from three Appeal Court judges sitting as the Divisional Court failed. So the show must go on — for now.

FURTHER INFORMATION has emerged concerning the advance fee fraudsman Alan Shephard and his latest crop of American victims.

It seems that Shephard has collected approaching $2 million in fees and expenses from four victims including two insurance companies! Two of the victims are public companies. As usual, Shephard was promising loans of from $25 million to $100 million from the ever bountiful Martini Foundation, a supposed Swiss based financial institution which, like the unicorn, is much talked of but seldom seen.

Despite parting with their money last year or earlier the Americans are still waiting for their loans or repayment of the fees. Each is just as unlikely given Shephard's past record.

Their confidence is unlikely to be increased by suggestions that none other than Sir Edward Du Cann's name has been linked to the foundation by Shephard who claims a close friend relationship. Du Cann is now bankrupt and awaiting moves by the Department of Trade & Industry to disqualify him as a director over his role in the collapsed Homes Assured. Certain of his ex-colleagues are currently on trial for fraud.

THE CONVICTION last month of Eagle Trust chairman John Ferriday for stealing £12 million in cash and shares was hardly a surprise to those who knew the facts. After all, he had publicly admitted using company money to save himself after secretly underwriting a rights issue which was sunk by the October 1987 crash. Yet the trial at Wolverhampton Crown Court lasted no less than TEN MONTHS.

Even after his three co-defendants were removed from the case by the judge in February the case still continued for several more weeks. And that was not due to any lengthy explanations from Ferriday. He, like so many "innocent" men in suits, did not give evidence.

Why did the proceedings take so long and cost the taxpayer so much? Observers in Wolverhampton place much of the blame on Ferriday's counsel David Hood for his prolonged cross-examination of witnesses. Hood would often take far longer than the prosecution and counsel for the three other defendants combined.

Of course defence counsel is entitled to act in the best interests of his client as he sees it — and in Ferriday's case this may have been the best if not the only way. But the judge is also supposed to ensure that trials are not overly lengthened and the burden on the jury made too great.

Unfortunately when it comes to curbing the excesses of counsel, all too often judges — as in the outrageous, year long Blue Arrow trial and the even longer Britannia theme park case — are shown to lack the necessary robustness. Fearing the possibility of creating grounds for appeal they allow the days to turn into weeks and the weeks into months.

Certainly it is said that Judge Malcolm Ward showed little robustness when it came to Hood. But then he might have heard of Hood's reputation for taking on judges. Mr Justice Henry learned all about that at first hand when Hood represented Lord Spens in Guinness Two.

So Ferriday received what he deserved — six years. Hood received a no doubt equally deserved generous fee. The taxpayer, however, is left with an undeserved and unnecessary hefty bill for a trial which could and should have lasted a much shorter time.

Until the cost conscious Lord Chancellor Lord Mackay addresses the millions wasted by the regular abuse witnessed in fraud trials by disciplining judges and penalising barristers then circuses like Eagle Trust, Blue Arrow, Britannia and Guinness will not only continue but grow ever more expensive.

PUBLIC RELATIONS tip-offs disguised as journalism or even revelation continue to dominate the respectable Sunday City pages. Latest coup for the PR men was the "scoop", shared by the *Sunday Times*, *Sunday Telegraph* and *Independent on Sunday* (May 2), that chief executive Jonathan Agnew was on his way out of merchant bankers Kleinwort Benson. The *Telegraph*'s city editor John Jay was so well informed he "revealed" what was already in rival newspapers. The PR men's aim, as ever, is to soften the blow of bad or surprise news by giving the City all day Sunday to think about it. The previous similar exercise was with Forte's decision to cut its final dividend last month. That price sensitive information managed to be "discovered" by all four Sunday rivals (April 11) in blissful ignorance of each other.

AMONG THE CITY PR men's favourite city editors is Jeff Randall of the *Sunday Times* — he was one of those who received the Forte and Kleinwort calls. But then he is such an endearingly faithful friend.

Just look at his fulsome tribute to old pal Philip Green, late of Amber Day (April 25), on the occasion of Green selling his share stake for 83.5p after the price had soared from nearly 20p following Green's departure. Randall blasted the "bears" who had tried hard to ruin Green in an "ugly episode" by focusing on his "unfashionable friends", his finances, his wife and even his mother!

What he did not say is that the only reason the Amber Day price recovered was Green's exit. Nor did he point out that the £7.67 million Green received might have to take some account of what Green owed to Barclays Bank whose nominees held the shares in its name — usual evidence of a loan.

But then how could he be so cruel. After all, as former Tottenham Hotspur chairman Irving Scholar, who knew both, recalls in his book Behind Closed Doors, Randall was "chummy" and "close" to Green.

THE NOT SO *Independent* appears to be adopting the unusual tactic of handicapping the performance of its tainted tipster "Changi" Jim Slater by using inaccurate and too-high prices. For his latest hot stock Slater selected Tepnel Diagnostics which he recommended at 245p (April 29). Unfortunately Tepnel, a small bio-technology company still only on the speculative Unlisted Securities Market, was only 229p. It promptly jumped 16p to 245p. But then "guru" Slater was similarly ill-informed when mentioning a rival, Haemocell. He thought the shares were 190p. Yet, according to the facing page of the very same *Independent*, they were only 186p. No doubt Slater's patrons, the very much unsaintly Andreas Whittam Strobes and his less than saintly business editor Christopher Huhne were distracted by events at the *Observer* and in the currency markets — of which much more later.

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Sunday Telegraph

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Anti-Caravan Club goes beyond a joke

A MOTORIST who found himself growing impatient whenever his car was stuck behind a slow-moving caravan had some joke stickers printed for the "Anti-Caravan Club", *write Anthea Hall and John Hancox.*

Things snowballed and, less than a year later, membership of John Williams's joke club has risen so quickly that it could overtake that of the Caravan Club by the end of the century.

At his proposed fee of £2 a head, the 27,000 applications he received would have brought in £54,000 — all as a result of the publicity from small ad in *Private Eye*.

Sunday Telegraph

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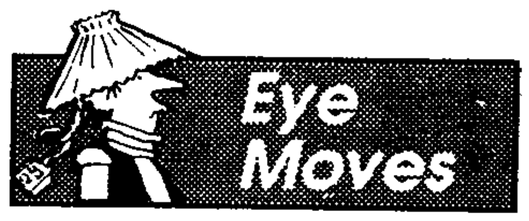

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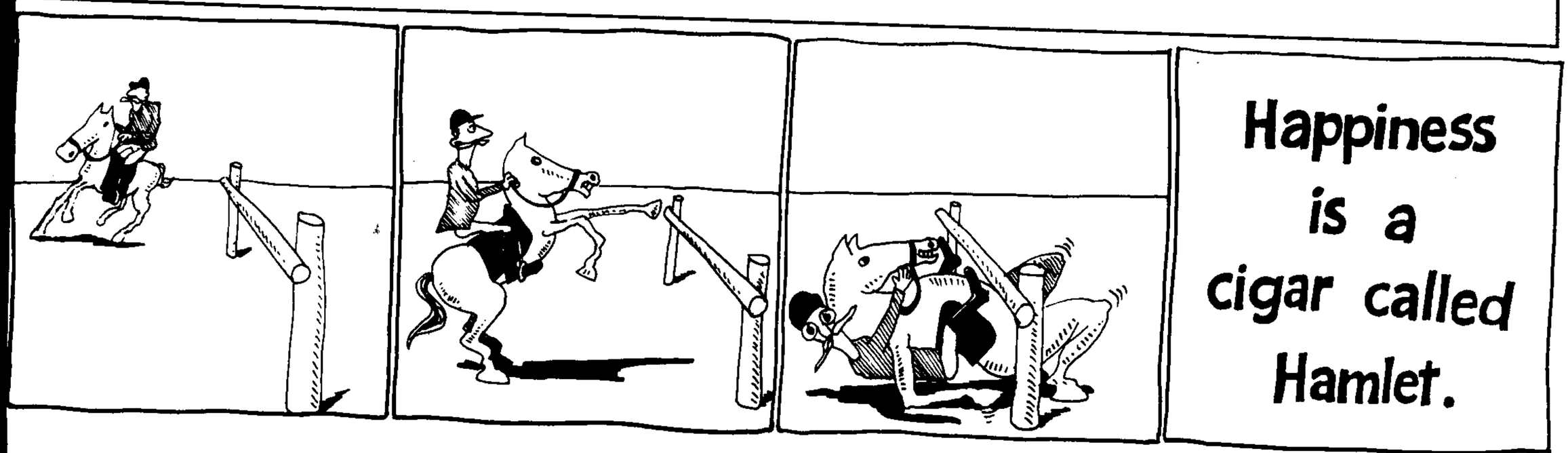

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Eye-opener

FATHER Joseph Chalmers, the new Prior Provincial of the Order of Carmelites in England, has arrived there via an unorthodox route. He was originally recruited, he disclosed yesterday, after spotting an advertisement placed by the order in the magazine *Private Eye*.

"I was training to be a solicitor and thought I knew where I was going when I saw the ad," recalled Chalmers, still a regular reader. "It caught my eye, and the Carmelites' place at Allington Castle in Kent sounded nice. I thought I would go there for a holiday [retreat] anyway."

Impressed by what he found, Chalmers took vows and is now the first Scot in the order's 751-year history to be elected head of the English Province. Chalmers said that the order chose *Private Eye* to attract a different type of friar. "We haven't advertised there since," he said. "Maybe that's because they got me."

Daily Telegraph

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THAI-FI: HIGH-FIDELITY ladies hoping for marriage. 72 Holcombe Street, Derby.

SCRUFFY, CAPABLE, unattached professional male, 35, likes music, smoking, dislikes bigots, seeks similar female, Cambs. Box 4819.

WELL PRESERVED 50 year old Oxford based professional seeks soulmate for love and friendship, SoH essential, otherwise all offers considered. Photo please. Box 4919.

GENUINE CARING affectionate guy 5'9", 29 yrs, professional, new to London, seeks attractive fun loving woman for nights out, age unimportant. Box 5019.

HANDSOME EDINBURGH based professional male, mid-thirties, tall, slim, SoH, seeks attractive female for passionate affair. Photo appreciated. Box 5119.

YORKSHIRE/ANYWHERE: literate, handsome male graduate, 35, eclectic, paradoxical, sociable Londoner, great job, not wealthy, loves Yorkshire but lonely, needs intelligent equanimous lovely lady, 24-35 for epochal romance. Box 5219.

ARE THERE ANY single intelligent men 25-35 in the W. Midlands? Female 25 wants to know. Box 5319.

ATTRACTIVE PROFESSIONAL man, 39, seeks wise young woman nearing 37, with whom he may share tropical pleasures, undersea secrets, pottery... Box 5419.

SLIM PROFESSIONAL lady (27) seeks sensitive attractive intelligent man — but all those guys have boyfriends! Please prove her wrong by replying with photo. Box 5519.

MALE 38 LAWYER — presentable, cultured, amusing, articulate, but independent and single. Absolutely discreet. Seeking attractive tender lady for romantic rendezvous and meaningful friendship but without ties. London based. Photo essential. Box 5619.

ARROGANT BITCH seeks arrogant bastard of issue 818 (or some other). I'm not writing first! Box 5719.

TO ARROGANT BASTARD, arrogant bitch here. Your move. Box 5819.

SUFFOLK MAN, tasty 43, in bland marriage, seeks spicy affair. Anywhere. Box 5919.

PROFESSIONAL MALE arts graduate,44, solvent, affectionate, nice looking (5'7", short dark hair, medium build); interests novels, jazz, cookery, seeks naughty but corrigible woman. London. Box 6119.

UNATTACHED UNCOMPLICATED man hooked on aviation, seeks mid 30s female to be his co-pilot in life. Pref n/s, based S/W London, Hants, and sharing love of fireside cuddles. Box 6219.

HANDSOME MALE would like to meet beautiful lady 20-35 for mutual pleasure. Box 4218.

RANDY BLOKE (49), sensual, single and solvent, wishes to meet horny lady (35+) for obvious reasons and more. Photo appreciated. Box 9619.

BLUE-EYED Englishwoman, 35, bright, independent, fab cook, wants happy, unpretentious, solvent, cultured bloke to join quest for second childhood. NW. Box 2319.

ATTRACTIVE HUMOROUS male, 38, seeks mature sensual female for romance, friendship and fun. Box 2419.

I WANT TO SPOIL lady in her thirties or forties who lives in London or Home Counties. We can have lots of fun and maybe holidays together. Photo please. Box 2519.

BUSINESS MALE 55 is looking for discreet friendship with sincere lady and lots of cuddles. Must be within 50 miles London. Photo please. Box 2619.

NICE, PROFESSIONAL girl, 35, seeks similar, successful male. Likes opera, cinema, good food (reputedly good cook), tennis, sailing, outdoor life. Photo/phone. Southwest. Box 2719.

SOS FROM LONELY ex-pat (30). Sends message in bottle from Caribbean paradise. Wishes to contact female, 20-30, to take the sting out of life. Box 2819.

INEXPERIENCED MALE (32) seeks attractive lady for tuition. Photo please. Box 2919.

ELEGANT FEMALE musician, 50, sunny personality, loves long distance walking in beautiful places, hates TV/pub evenings and instant coffee. Seeks cultured male soulmate. South. Box 3019.

MIDDLE AGED REBEL, male 45, seeks woman conspirator to cause trouble with. Box 3119.

SCOTTISH LADY ARTIST, 49 + 550 days, inspired by Tuscany and Russia seeks a Leonardo Vladimir Walter Scott-Stuart. Box 3219.

TALL, SLIM, attractive man sought by short, slim, attractive woman (40, smokes) to make S/Cambs, N/Essex long summer evenings even nicer. Box 3319.

PETER PAN, 35, trapped in North Yorkshire, recently escaped from a crocodile, seeks a Wendy to help him return to the stars. Show me the magical properties that will bring the twinkle back to my eyes. Box 3419.

JOSEPHINE SEEKS Napoleon for French leave in Languedoc and French toast in Twickenham. Box 3519.

WELL-TO-DO CHUNKY handsome *fit 39* year old, romantically shy, slightly cynical ex-workaholic, ne'er married scruff, is looking for 25-35 yr old slightly built female nutter without ties to fall about with and share giggles and grief, NW area. Box 3619.

For just under £30 Carl Proctor, an independent producer, secured £13,000 investment from an individual after he placed an ad in the Eye-Need column in July 1991. His plea, reading "Angels wanted for West End rock 'n' roll musical", got replies from two girls wanting parts as celestial bodies, a Hells Angel offering his services and a substantial donation which allowed *Good Golly Miss Molly* its four-month run in the West End. "I found I raised £60,000 without too much difficulty," Mr Proctor says.

Life & Times

BAAA! TWO LONDON based sheep looking for two Bo-peeps into football, rock music, Monty Python, Viz etc. We're late twenties and looking for fun and...? Photos preferred. Box 3719.

TOYBOY, 26, SINGLE, slim, seeks mature (40 plus) lady for discreet, no-strings occasional safe sexy fun. Box 3819.

I JUST WANT a lover like any other. Midlands female,29, seeks male friend who'll stay 'til the end. Box 3919.

PROFESSIONAL MALE, 30s, successful, single, offers romance/share in life's adventures to young, intelligent lady. No Tories. Dorset/Hants. Box 4019.

JONATHAN STUBBS seeks Ayala. Box 8819.

LONDON PROFESSIONAL man (45) seeks sexy lady for steamy relationship. Phone 071 722 1560 weekdays office hours.

ATTRACTIVE MILLIONAIRE, 43, seeks good-looking lively girl 25-35 years, winter skiing, summer sailing. Permanent relationship possible. Photo required. Box 4219.

FORTY SOMETHING male, very successful, professional, loosely (though happily) tied, seeks lover 18-68 for occasional days,nights, W/Es, foreign holidays, provided she has brains, humour and curiosity about people, places and, er, life. Box 4319.

TALL, SLIM ENGINEER, 43, seeks intelligent woman, 30-40, for regular servicing! C. London/S. Hants. Box 4419.

TRANSVESTITE (26) unemployed graduate desperately seeks female "Tootsie" fan for friendship and fun, London. Box 4519.

FRAZIER (32, BERKSHIRE, N/S, veggieish) seeks Lilith. No Rebeccas or Carlas. View to long term relationship, possible Little Frederick(a) later. Photo/letter to Box 4619.

INTELLIGENT, SQUIDGY- hearted, macho man, 26-32? Want an attractive, petite, intelligent female (21)? Look no further. Box 6319.

TENDER LOVING care, loyal happy clever woman 34 graduate needs like-minded single handsome man for togetherness (West London). Enthusiasm, passion, sense of humour important. Box 6419.

BARBIE NEEDS KEN! Blonde buxom American (39) shopping for living doll. Photo please? Box 6519.

RESUSCITATE NEWISH man, 32, outdoor, casual, fun, media type, bored and pissed off. London woman 25-45 with smile, warmth, life, into walking, cinema, fun, bonking, needed urgently to restore my smile. (Geena Davis with walking boots.) Box 6819.

HANDSOME, PROFESSIONAL male in lifeless marriage, 44, 5'10", slim andfit with wide interests and SoH, seeks attractive witty broadminded lady for discreet friendship, based on mutual pleasure and sensual adventure. Yorkshire/North, often London. Box 6919.

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E. MIDS/S. YORKS male 45, divorced, solvent, sporty, likes gracious living, country life seeks female any age, colour. No emotional baggage please. Photo optional. Box 4719.

SUCCESSFUL MUSIC business entrepreneur (London) seeks warm, understanding female as friend and occasional confidential assistant. Photo, plus phone number or SAE please. Box 8015.

ATTRACTIVE EDUCATED slim sensuous blonde (40+) seeks upmarket generous man (55+) for occasional lighthearted lustful lunches. Surrey/London. Box 8419.

CHARMING, PRETTY Scots lady, 35, seeks self-assured gentleman for old fashioned romance, London. Box 8519.

SCHOOLGIRL (33) SEEKS sixth-former for snog behind the bikesheds. SoH essential. Bristol/Newcastle. Box 8619.

EX-LONDON MALE, 45, living Cardiff, unattached, n/s, professional, traveller, seeks younger female partner with SoH. Box 8719.

ATTRACTIVE SUCCESSFUL artist, 40, with house on the beach seeks younger pretty lady to listen to the sea with. Box 7819.

ROMANTIC DREAMER (male, 23), craving for good wine and mellow music seeks similar female 21-30 for summer fun, relationship. S. Hants. Box 7919.

CURVACEOUS LOW MILEAGE classic, first registered 1949, never raced or rallied, seeks reckless driver for Grand Prix outings. Send blueprint including photo and tread depth. Box 8019.

LADY LAWYER, petite, attractive brunette, 34, seeks distinguished, unattached, arts oriented professional male graduate for champagne evenings. Box 8119.

STUNNING BRUNETTE, tall, blue eyes, long hair, 26, desperately needs consoling after divorce. Age unimportant. Please help! London. Box 8219.

TALL, FIT SINGLE male (39) seeks similar female for sporting activities. E. Midlands. Box 8319.

TAILPIECE

Spike Milligan said he put an ad in Private Eye saying he wanted to meet a rich, well-insured widow. Intention: murder. He had 48 replies.

Derbyshire Life & Countryside

DUSKY BEAUTY seeks gentleman — any nationality, 28-to-40ish. Photo and telephone. Box 9019.

GENEROUS, KIND, fit, affectionate man, own teeth, 45, seeks attractive, intelligent, humorous lady to meet discreetly for uncomplicated romance, passion and occasional breakfast. London or Home Counties. Box 9119.

HANDSOME COVE 35 seeks pouting crumpet for mutual adoration, laughs and japes. Photo if poss. Box 8919.

WOMEN: WRITE TO ME if you like, but first ask yourself "Is it worth it?" I probably won't reply and even if I do I'll turn out to be a fat balding boring London bloke aged 37. Box 9219.

SEXY INTELLIGENT toyboy seeks sexy, intelligent lady (25-35) to make sparks fly with mixture of heated debate and shameless hedonism. Flexible, discreet, Scottish. Photo please. Box 9819.

SLIM ATTRACTIVE witty professional lady, youthful 40s, seeks kind generous romantic humorous tall male equivalent. Wilts/Hants. Letter, photograph appreciated. Box 9919.

ARE YOU: MALE, early thirties, unattached, witty, intelligent, patient, honest, good looking, sporty, into outdoor pursuits/foreign travel, possibly ex-forces/medic, certainly professional? I am most of the above, and more! If you want fun, adventure, companionship and even romance, write to me (photo please) and tell me more! Box 10019.

RESPECTABLE PRESENTABLE married man, tall n/s, seeks lissom articulate lady 35-50 for daytime liaison (Norfolk). Box 10119.

TALL GOOD NATURED chap, 39 non smoker seeks plump or over weight lady 40-70 for warm unbridled naughtiness on the sofa. Photo not essential but frank letter is. Box 10219.

REALLY NICE MAN, mid 40s, married, professional, tall and presentable with well-kept beard, seeks light-hearted intuitive woman for discreet liaison or possibly something stronger. Box 10319.

SERENE, VOLUPTUOUS, Slavonic woman, late 40s, Surrey, seeks decisive, protective n/s man of substance (any age) who genuinely appreciates mature woman and seeks commitment/marriage. Box 10419.

NEST AVAILABLE for free range hen. Nestbuilder, 29, single, graduate, slightly mad, honest. Sheffield. Box 7019.

GARDENER SEEKS Lady Chatterley. Loves forking. Box 7119.

PROFESSIONAL MALE, early 40s, recently (voluntarily) redundant seeks attractive lady who perhaps also has time on her hands. London area preferred. Box 7219.

JELLYBABY MASTICATING female Scottish accountant, 29, seeks happy n/s male for canoodling under the moon. Photo appreciated. Box 7319.

STRAPPING, LITHE (30s) satyr seeks succuba (slim), savouring sultrinesss, salacity and Sauterne. Photo? Phone? Box 7419.

HANDSOME, INTELLIGENT, solvent bon vivant, 40, seeks shapely temptress, single or married, for lots of laughter and slow seduction. South of M4. Box 7519.

LADY, SLIM, FAIR, forties, no ties, seeks tall attractive nonsmoking gentleman for occasional special evenings out. Perhaps more. Cheshire/Derbyshire. Box 7619.

IS THERE LIFE after clubbing? Unconventional stylish woman seeks chill-out partner. Midlands. Box 7719.

CULTURED DYNAMIC MD needs exciting smart female companion to control my ego and squander my assets. Fun company assured. 30s. Photo and capitvating letter please. Costa del North Yorkshire. Box 6619.

GOODLOOKING MAN, 49, slim, fair, cheerful, sensitive, but lifeless marriage, seeks attractive female for romantic encounters. London area. Box 6719.

Eye Soldier

DASHING YOUNG BLADE (24, 5'10", dark hair, brown eyes) seeks lovely lady early 20s to spoil at Cavalry Ball in June. Fun guaranteed, no strings required. Good looks, sense of humour, photo essential. Box 9319.

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If you simply want to reply to an advertiser, just dial the telephone number shown in your chosen advertisement and leave your details after the tone.

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ENTREPRENEURIAL YET CARING male lawyer, 29, with a thirst for the good things in life, seeks intelligent and personalitied female. Ring 0839 514228

INTELLIGENT, ATTRACTIVE, Amazonian woman (6ft 1in) seeks articulate, humorous and handsome professional male for laughs, lunacy and hopefully love. Ring 0839 514647

FUN LOVING MALE, 44, single, 5ft 6in tall, slimmish, neat looks, seeks lady, 28-36, for stimulating long term friendship and romance. London/Home Counties. Ring 0839 514086

ATTRACTIVE LADY, 40, dark hair, green eyes, cuddly, own car and home. Seeks intelligent non-smoking male 45-52 with gsoh for honest relationship. Ring 0839 514939

I TWINKLE - DO YOU? Attractive Jewish woman, spirit warm leftish, playful, seeks good conversation/laughter, mutual consideration, solvency and long term twinkability. 38+. Ring 0839 514772

GOOD LOOKING GUY (honestly!), just turned 30, slim, easy going, employed, he is trying this, seeks so far elusive, slim, pretty, affectionate girlfriend, 21-29. Ring 0839 514356

ATTRACTIVE, SLIM, YOUTHFUL, fortyish, environmentally aware, n/s Yorkshire male, seeks similar female thirty/fortyish, for relationship and/or mutually satisfying times. Ring 0839 514261

CALLING ANY MALE who thinks personality is more important than dress size. This large lady is waiting to hear from you. Ring 0839 514386

TALL, SLIM, PROFESSIONAL n/s lady, 43, varied interests, wishes to meet well groomed, 6ft+, slim to medium build, non-smoking male, for friendship/relationship. Ring 0839 514996

ATTRACTIVE LEO LADY, 23, sincere, honest, genuine, romantic, lots of interests, seeks similar male for friendship and hopefully long term relationship. Ring 0839 514589

ATTRACTIVE, MATURE, intelligent and confident professional man, 32, seeks questioning and lively woman graduate (25-40) for films, concerts and friendship, potential soulmates welcome. Ring 0839 514155

SOUTH BUCKS MAN seeks female any age up to 45, for fun filled relationship, nights out and more. Ring 0839 514586

HAPPY, VIVACIOUS, glamorous blonde, 40, Jewish, with a successful career, seeks a similar, dynamic, fun-loving, successful Jewish man, 38/48, for a sharing and caring serious relationship. North West. Ring 0839 514234

OPTIMISTIC, ATTRACTIVE, professional woman, 40s, enjoys great outdoors, arts, ideas, travel and talking, would love to share all these with warm, interesting, humorous man. Ring 0839 514916

YET ANOTHER ATTRACTIVE MALE, 37, unattached, 6ft 2in, own flat, loves walking, talking and travel, seeks female soulmate, 22-33, for friendship/romance. Ring 0839 514116

HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL, FEMALE entrepreneur, young, vivacious, attractive, creative and stylish, happy and contented. Seeks strong, tall, supportive, successful, sexy, soulmate for love and marriage. Ring 0839 514227

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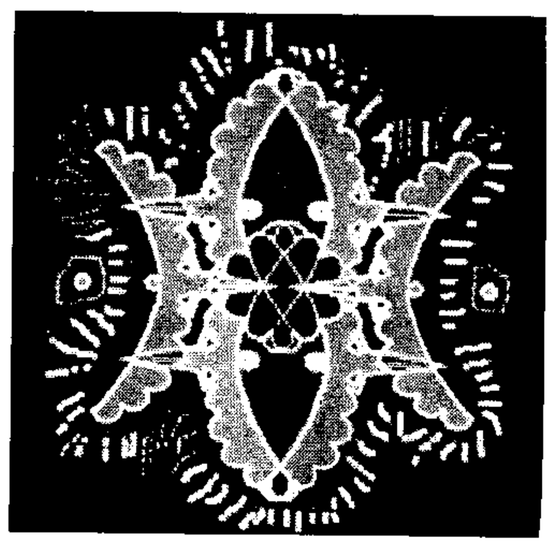

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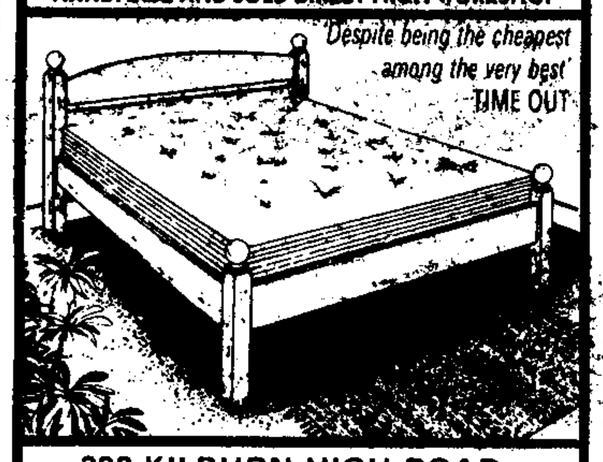

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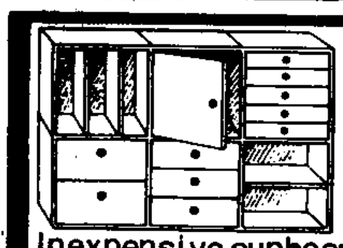

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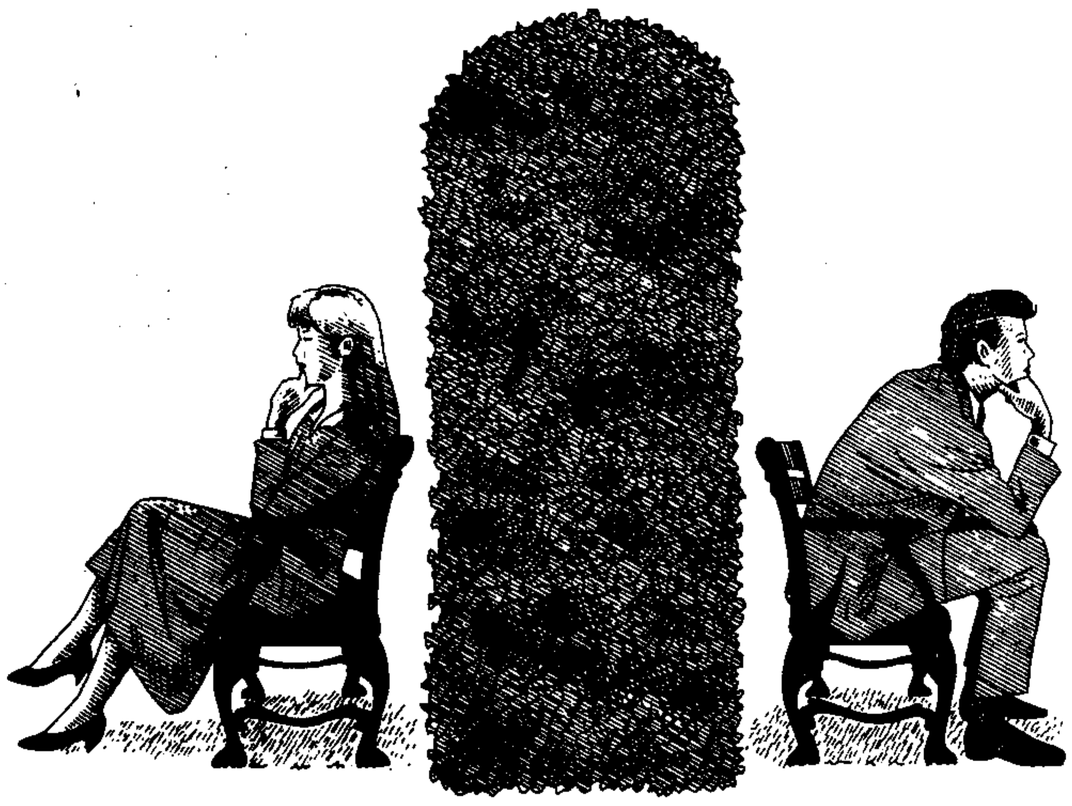

WHO ARE YOU? WHO ARE YOU LOOKING FOR?

If you respond to this advertisement, you'll be sent a very detailed questionnaire.
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Next you're asked to describe the kind of person you'd like to meet by answering the same set of questions.
You can even specify WHERE you'd like to meet them. (It's little use our finding you the right person in John O'Groats if you live at Land's End).
Then the questionnaire moves on to the really crucial part, where you answer questions about your interests, your personality and what you expect from your social life and personal relationships.
(Most people find the questionnaire both enjoyable and revealing).
Once the questionnaire is completed and returned to us, our computer goes to work, checking through the records of every single Dateline member, searching for the person who best matches the picture you've built up.
And it's important to remember that the computer may already be searching for YOU on someone else's behalf.

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Our computer can't, of cours make relationships: only you can do that.
All the computer does is mak the introductions and we find usually selects six compatible people in each run.
Their names are given to you all you have to do is arrange t meet. Naturally, there's no guarantee any introduction w be a success, but consider th for once, you'll be meeting someone who POSITIVELY WANTS TO MEET YOU – and that's a good start to any relationship.
Dateline, we must stress, is not for people who think it migh be a bit of a lark, but for caring people who are looking for something more. Perhaps that describes you?
If it does, fill in the coupon and we'll send you our questionnaire, together with a free copy of our paperback "A you need is love" – a book full of genuine stories of how Dateline members meet their ideal partner. Naturally, your enquiry will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

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